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MURDER

DAVID S. GREENBERG

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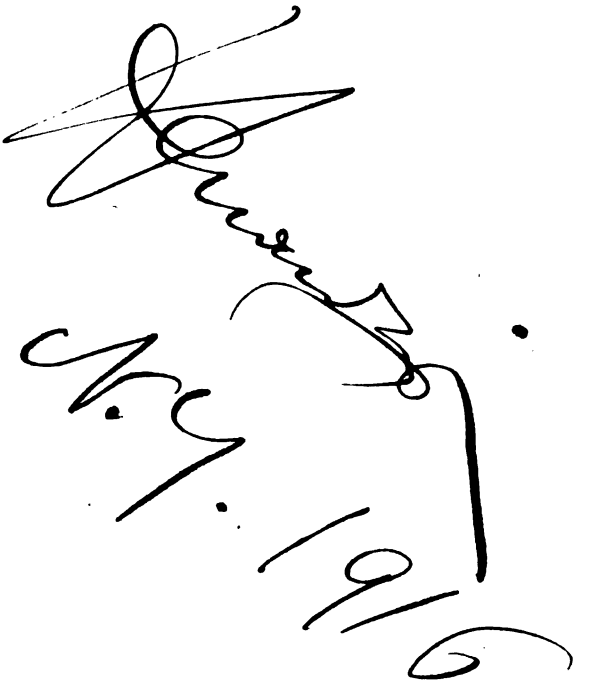

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MURDER

By

DAVID S. GREENBERG

Author of
"A Bunch of Little Thieves"

> But the worst form of murder is the destruction of hope and ambition in the individual. With ambition that beckons us gone, with hope that lights our way extinguished, we are made fit for crime. With every road darkened we are more apt to take that one which goes down. Without a force to drive us and the strength with which to go, the downward path seems easiest.

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CONTENTS

PART		PAGE
I.	The Sins of Our Fathers . . .	9
II.	In the Making	141
III.	What Might Have Been	411
IV.	Oh, the End of Some of Us! . . .	547

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THE SINS OF OUR FATHERS

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MURDER

PART I

THE SINS OF OUR FATHERS!

CHAPTER I.

Three years and one long summer of toiling for Charles J. Androon, shirtmaker, had sapped most of poor Matilda's energy. The day, though late in Autumn, had been exceptionally warm and the weariness with which her hands worked showed unmistakably upon her rather pretty face. If Matilda's cheeks had not been so pale and hollow, if her beautiful eyes had not been kept wet with excessive crying, she would have been an extremely pretty girl. Her shoulders she kept straight in spite of her work, for she was aware of the beauty of her figure and knew that with effort and will power she could keep them straight, even though she could not ward off the hollows in her cheeks and neck. Her white waist was covered with particles of colored cloth dust, rubbed from the many-colored fabrics in the shop's process of shirtmaking. She had forced the shirtwaist about her neck as far back as she thought was permissible, revealing a dainty little throat, slightly marred by a dust-laden little hollow that should not have been there. Her arms were bare.

The powerful engine back of Matilda groaned away as if it had no intention of ever stopping. The

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wheel sang in its spokeless whirling and drove many leather belts, creeping and crawling over walls and ceiling. In the meshes of the mechanical jungle, toiled insanely and incessantly, men, women and children with eyes intent on needle and seam. With yellow and pale faces, with watery and bloodshot eyes, sunk deep in their dust-filled sockets, with pale and yellow arms and often distorted fingers, they worked, existing for their work alone, while in the world there was peace and rest and happiness.

Most of the men stood in sleeveless undershirts, covered with dust and dirt; and all the girls, like Matilda, folded in the collars of their shirtwaists as far away from their sensitive necks as they could, and rolled the long sleeves and the short sleeves almost up to their arm-pits. Many faces bore wrinkles, filled and exaggerated with the smoke of their toil.

Hour by hour, day by day, week after week, and year after year, the young grew old in this dark, gloomy shop and the old grew older and died. The young still fed their souls upon vague expectations—shapeless hopes that some day soon emancipation would drop down from heaven and give them the opportunity the ways of life had denied them. They dreamed of homes, of rest, of love, and of good things. The old resigned themselves to the disappointing way of things, and placed the residue of their youthful hopes in the possibilities of an hereafter. But to young and old the bitterest sound of the day was the morning whistle, the sweetest music, the six o'clock blow.

Matilda looked up at the clock for the thousandth time. It was only five o'clock. There was yet an hour before she could begin the execution of the plan she had been dwelling upon all day and most of the night before. The wheels seemed to grind into her flesh.

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She was possessed by a creeping fear that her finger would slip under the needle. The rise and fall of the annoying buzz as individual or groups of machines began to grind in one part of the shop and came to a standstill in another part, grated mercilessly upon her much strained nerves. She longed for more air. She was thirsty and desired intensely something good to drink.

"If I were married," she thought, picturing a cozy little flat, "I could make lovely drinks."

She looked down at her waist to see if she couldn't legitimately roll it a little further away from her touchy neck. Her eyes fell upon her dust-covered skin and she recollected how her neck had appeared to her when she had seen it in the looking-glass that morning. The little hollow at its base was like a sore to her.

"That's just it all right," she said to herself as she shoved the pink cloth under the needle, "I look like a skeleton. He's gotten sick of me."

She had a very clear picture of Carl as he stood at his table in one of the other rooms of Androon's shop. She saw him, too, in a thousand different attitudes as she had seen him throughout the months and years of her life in the orphanage. Things he had said and done came to her mind and she was certain that all the aching, all the pulling of her life would cease if she could withdraw somewhere with him. Then realizing how impossible it would be for them to withdraw anywhere, she proceeded to convince herself that even if she remained right there toiling by his side, as it were, they could be very happy.

She had been thinking busily and working rapidly when suddenly to her very great relief, the whistle blew. Instantly there arose a tumult of wild voices, the shoving and overturning of chairs, and the rush-

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ing of many feet; while the great engine wheel, like a dying being, sobbed, going more and more slowly, till its life went out in motionlessness.

Matilda dropped the material upon which she had been working, and, hastily grabbing her belongings, shoved her way through a group of girls and came to a long table loaded with rolls of cloth where a medium-sized girl stood fixing herself up for departure. She was somewhat younger than Matilda and not quite so pretty.

"I am not going home with you to-night, Anna," said the former hastily and started away.

"What's the matter?" Anna yelled after her.

"Will tell you to-night," she called back and disappeared, heading for the hallway and the office at its other end.

All day the plan had seemed a good one and entirely proper, but as she approached the office it began to worry her. "Why bother this man? What will he think about it anyway? It will look as if I'm running after him. No, I shall make Fred understand that I didn't come to ask him to help me get him. I want to settle it, that's all!"

In the outer office, a small space partitioned off from the main office room, she waited nervously. In the main office two men were speaking. She saw them through a window in the partition. The one she was most interested in, was a young man with an old face. It was a beautiful face, beautiful with the soul expressed upon it, but saddened by the burden of too much serious thinking. He might have done for an illustration of the man who bore the burden of the world upon his shoulders, for one of those shoulders was slightly higher than the other as if he kept shifting his burden between them. The second man was extremely well dressed, very robust and

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possessed a face lit up with his own importance and expressive of the authority he could wield.

"What's the use talking any further about it," said the latter, "I know what I'm doing, and if you don't like it you may talk to Mr. Androon, himself, about it. But take my advice and mind your own affairs. He just told me yesterday that you are interfering entirely too much. I tell you this because I am more of a friend of yours than you think I am."

"You need never bother befriending me, Mr. Donald," said the former, "I have put the matter before you, because I am powerless to do anything else; but I tell you again, and you can go and tell Mr. Androon if you wish to, that it's downright robbery. The poor devil has been crippled for life and you know that he has always been a conscientious worker and never was negligent."

"Why don't you go to court and defend him, Mr. Kaye?"

"I will when I get through with my course. If I can't help him, I will help other poor devils like him."

"You'll make heaps of money, take it from me," said the handsome Mr. Donald sarcastically, sneering as he said it.

"Let God help you to such money," cried Mr. Kaye with disgust, and grabbing his hat, he started out.

"Fred," said Matilda nervously, when he came into the outer office, "I want to talk to you a few minutes."

"Yes, surely," he murmured hoarsely, his face still flushed, "let's go out."

The building in which Mr. Androon had his shop on the highest story, was situated at the base of a triangular space formed by the meeting of three oblique streets running from east to west through many

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blocks of skyscrapers and tenements, from Broadway to the Hudson River. On the right and left of the triangle were respectively an orphanage and a public school, facing each other.

"I never leave this doorway or enter it without thinking of the remarkable arrangement of these three buildings," said Fred when they reached the street. "I can almost see the streams of young people coming from that school and that orphan asylum right into the mouth-like entrance of this thing with its grinding shops. This triangle ought to be a square. There ought to be a cemetery on the fourth side or at least some big undertaker's establishment."

Matilda laughed. "That's the way I came all right, but I hope we'll get out of here before we need the cemetery or the undertaker."

"I hope so too, Matilda."

"Quite a few of us came that way. Anna and Carl did."

"Suppose you come to Mr. Androon's restaurant and have something to eat with me?" said Fred showing that he had been thinking about what she wished to talk to him.

"Can't we go to the park?" she asked timidly.

"What's the matter with Androon's cafe?"

"I don't like to take your time," she began, "and I don't like to go in looking like this."

"You won't be taking any of my time. I just don't feel like going to school to-night and I won't go. As to your looks, you look good enough for me. Come, let's see if we can't help Androon out a bit. He almost lost a few hundred dollars."

They came upon Broadway, walked up about half a dozen blocks and turned in on Twelfth Street, then walked one block west, arriving before a four-story hotel. The corner store had been turned into a

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beer saloon and the store next to it, into a cafe. Between the two was the hotel entrance. Over half of the large cafe window was made opaque by a heavy champagne colored curtain in the center of which was embroidered, in capital letters, the name ANDROON.

"I didn't know Androon had a hotel," said Matilda, wishing she didn't have to go into the place looking as she did.

"He just got possession of it a week ago. It belonged to an old uncle of his who was good enough to betake himself into the hereafter a year ago and left a few heirs scrapping over it till our Androon, who never loses, went off with it, though he of all of them, is the richest, and some of the others are really poor."

Within the cafe were many small tables and a few large ones, all covered with white table cloths each one having a small electric lamp with a red, fancy shade, upon it.

Not more than half a dozen patrons were in the room at the time they entered and a few neatly dressed waiters with dead faces, looking like part of the fixtures, stood behind some of the tables.

Fred made for the most secluded table and ordering the meal, put himself into a listening posture and waited to hear Matilda's story. But the purpose of the meeting had suddenly assumed so ridiculous an aspect in her mind that she could not begin and would most gladly have taken advantage of the first opportunity to escape the need of baring the thoughts that seemed so sound but an hour ago.

Fred soon sensed her condition and did all in his power to relieve it. The food was brought and she forced herself to eat. He tried to be humorous, spoke of different things as if they had been in the habit of meeting this way, and kept his eyes away from her while she ate.

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By the time they were through with the heavier part of the meal and the waiter, having brought their desert, went off to attend to a group of patrons who had just entered, a great deal of her discomfort had left her, and suddenly, like one who having been afraid of the water dives right in, she began her story, her face extremely flushed, her eyes rarely looking up.

"You know, Fred, that Carl and I, well, we were as much as engaged, don't you?"

"I think I understood that."

"Well, since he's been on such good terms with you, he's—he's forgotten me. I'm not running after him, I'm not asking you to get him for me, but I just want to know what's the matter. He never went home a single night without taking me home. Since he lives with you, he stopped little by little and now it's almost a week since he has even spoken to me. He rushes out as soon as the whistle blows."

Fred had not quite expected such a charge and was so taken aback he felt the need of a few moments deliberation.

"I'm going to come right out frankly, Fred," she went on. "I believe you are the cause of it all. Because the last time I saw you and Carl together you went on talking your philosophy about having no right to get married till we can afford to bring up children, decently, and because you don't deny it now."

Still Fred was unable to reply and his silence angered her.

"I don't see why you have to meddle in other people's affairs," she cried now, certain that he was responsible for Carl's behavior.

Fred looked at her a moment steadily and accusingly.

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"Yes, you are to blame," she cried again, "I thought it all along, but now I *know* it."

Fred continued looking at her. He was sorry for her. The sorrowful eyes, the consumed face and the shivering limbs constituted an argument too strong for his theories. He had no way of answering.

"If I were wrong, you'd say so at once."

"My dear Miss Keller," he replied with deep feeling, "you are the very last person on earth whom I should want to hurt."

"You did just the same," she whimpered.

"Now, tell me what it is that I did."

"I can't say you did anything. I know that Carl has had almost nothing to do with me since he and you have become so friendly. I am not running after him. If he has changed his mind I can get along without him if he can get along without me; but I want to know that. I don't believe he has changed his mind. I believe you have been talking your philosophy to him."

"That is all the proof you have?"

"I know that he never went home a single night without Anna and me until he and you became so friendly, and I know he hasn't seen me now for almost a week."

"And that proves that I am the cause of all your trouble?"

"I don't know what it proves and I don't care. I know that if you have been talking the kind of stuff that I heard when we all went home together last week, that you are the cause of it. It's alright for you to go on having theories about these things when you don't have to suffer as we do. Neither Carl nor I know what it is to have a home. I don't see why

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we haven't as much right to one as the rest of yo : people."

The last of Matilda's sentences brought a succession of pictures into Fred's mind, illustrating her whole life's story and Carl's and in the heat of the moment he was not only convinced of the fallacy of his theories, but actually regretted ever having given expression to them.

"I confess, Matilda, that I have never seen it that way, I mean I have never thought of it as concretely as you make me think of it now. I realize that some of us are nothing but theorizers, unwilling perhaps, to live up to our own theories,—some of them, in certain circumstances; but will you admit that there is another side to the question?"

"I admit nothing. I tell you again I don't care anything about your words on the matter. I have to feel these things, and I don't even care to discuss it with you. You have no right to meddle in our affairs and to shove your theories between Carl and me."

Matilda stared upon a piece of bread that the waiter in cleaning up had left. Her eyes were filling and the desert stood untouched.

"But really, Matilda, I think it is very unfair of you to blame me for this thing just because you have heard me say something about poor people having no right to bring children into the world."

"I can't see what else could be the cause of it. I know Carl thinks a great deal of me. We have been looking forward to having a little home for years. Carl is a good boy and very easily led. He worships you and every word you say means a whole lot to him."

"Too bad he doesn't know me as well as you do."

"That's just the trouble with the whole world," she went on ignoring his attempted jest, "there are

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too many theorists. All I have ever gotten out of people is theory. Simple food is better for me, while everybody else is enjoying good things. I must theorize about being happy with my circumstances while everybody else is having a good time. Me, they tell that poor clothes don't count, while wherever you go people look down on you if your clothes aren't just so. I tell you, I am sick of your old theories. They're nothing but lies to make me satisfied while the rest of you are having a good time."

Fred looked at her for a few minutes, then said with a smile, "You have a very good brain, Matilda."

"I don't care anything about that. I didn't arrange this to see how many compliments you could give me. There really is no use talking to you. I knew beforehand that it was useless."

Her eyes filled again. The tears welled up till they overflowed and rolled down her cheeks.

"I'm very sorry, Matilda, to see you so unhappy. I'm sure you are mistaken about my being the cause of your trouble. If you will tell me how, I will do anything I can to help you."

"If I could only make up my mind to the truth that all that I can ever look forward to is not to be a bit better than what has been since I can remember," she went on as if he had said nothing, "I'd drown myself as soon as I got the courage to do so."

"It is foolish for you to talk that way. It *must* not be as it has been. You are a very nice, thoughtful girl. It's surprising to me that some nice fellow hasn't offered you a home."

"What are you talking about, Fred?" she cried, "will you tell me?'

Fred's face turned red.

"Excuse me, Matilda," he said in a soft whisper, "I was looking at you and thinking aloud. I wasn't

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thinking of you and Carl. I—I was just thinking. That often happens to me—even in school."

Matilda could hardly contain herself. Her head was splitting with pain and heat. The slip he had made had betrayed him. She knew now that there was no more hope, that as she had thought, they had agreed upon Carl's leaving her. Without saying another word, she rushed for her hat on the rack and started for the door.

Quite bewildered and worried, Fred settled matters with the waiter and rushed out after her. Never in his life had he seen so great a change come upon a human being. She looked as if she were already dead and he feared that she would attempt to kill herself. He grabbed her arm to which she made but feeble resistance and they walked on for a while unable to speak.

"I want to know," she said suddenly stopping on a corner and facing him, "what have you people been doing? What did you decide? I want to know, that's all there is to it."

"Now listen, Matilda," muttered Fred nervously, "if you want me to talk to you, you must control yourself. I'll tell you everything you want to know, but you must act sensibly. If you make a ridiculous scene on the street I'll have to—"

He didn't finish his sentence for he saw a submissive expression come upon her face and felt her arm relax.

"Carl is not well," he began.

Matilda saw hope in that remark and, bracing up, began to walk again, almost pulling him along.

"What is the matter?" she asked without looking up.

"Carl has consumption."

Again Matilda's attitude changed. She became

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very calm and spoke as if she greatly regretted having abused him.

"Is it very bad?" she wanted to know.

"I don't know that it is so very bad, but he needs much care and treatment."

"Is that why he has kept away from me?"

"I think it is."

"And you advised him to keep away from me?" she went on in the hope that she might prove the existence of some excuse for her attack upon him.

"I did not. When the doctor made plain to him the seriousness of his condition, he came to talk to me about it."

Matilda felt stronger, and paradoxically, happier. The thing had a different aspect now. His illness, though a slight shock to her, merely strengthened her case. She saw many reasons now for hastening their marriage and stated them. During her verbal struggle with Fred, she had actually gotten to hate him, but now she felt differently. She spoke softly and kindly and enjoyed the sensation of nearness to him, enjoyed the slowness and roundness of his voice and the touch of his hand on her arm.

"Is the doctor treating him now?" she asked anxiously.

"Yes. He is quite well taken care of. I have fixed up a bed for him in my front room, right near the windows. It doesn't cost him anything to stay with me, and he can use the money it used to cost him where he was, on doctor and medicine."

"Where does he eat?"

"We cook our own food."

Matilda's imagination very actively began the construction of a little home. She saw the neat little flat, saw Carl exercising regularly, saw a neat clean bed which she set for him near the two open windows,

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saw the many healthy simple dishes she would make for him, and above all felt the spirit of their love permeating everything. She saw all these things most clearly and wondered why anyone should ever doubt the great possibility. She laid the matter of her thoughts before Fred, and to her delight and surprise he did not doubt that possibility.

They arrived before a four-story, brown-stone building on West Eighteenth Street.

"I'll call him down," said Fred and started for the door, but, changing his mind, he returned. "Suppose you come up with me?"

She accepted the invitation, showing only as much anxiety to do so, as she couldn't hide, and started up.

An odor of fried meat lingered throughout the dimly lit hallways and created very distinct sensations of the home Matilda longed and hoped for, in her mind. In the short space of time that it took her to climb to the flat, she lived through the greater part of her life, in fact, nearly all the rest of it. Oh, if we could only build through the future the reality of our lives as the longing mind hopefully forecasts it! If we only had the child-like dream chance to try! She entertained no doubt, as she ascended with beating heart that things would work out just as she pictured they would, for she depended with great confidence on the desire that burned within her. The idea that Carl was a consumptive did not bother her so very much. He had often jested about that possibility. She was used to the idea, having taken it seriously so many times, but she knew that consumptive people can live a long time or for some time any way, and her desire was so great she was willing to accept the short period of bliss in spite of what might follow it. Besides she would take care of him and she was sure that by taking care of him she would

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prolong that period of bliss indefinitely—so indefinitely her mind was too weary to try to reach its other end. But what an opportunity it gave her for pressing her suit for a home.

Maltida was a very good girl. Her school education had been limited to knowing how to read, write, and cook; but she had always loved reading, and while at the orphanage had read enough to gain a social consciousness. She knew that she was a member of a great group of beings and realized that there was something wrong about adding miserable and unhappy children to a world that was already so full of misery and unhappiness; but the maternal instinct was undeniable in Matilda, and persisted and grew stronger in spite of her shop work and the poverty that hung about her. Like all good people, she first sought to justify the thing that seemed wrong and then proceeded to act according to her desire with the feeling that it was wrong no more and that she was acting not only morally but very bravely. The desire to have a baby pressed upon her girlish heart and when her reason cast shadows of what might be upon that desire, she promised herself and her race in her deep nocturnal prayers that she would sacrifice everything —herself—for that baby boy and that she would thus make a great man of him, who in turn would make the world better, less miserable. It never occurred to her that she might have nothing to sacrifice and that human life might be so cheap that a sacrifice of herself would be worthless.

Fred's rooms, he had three of them, were scantily furnished in the manner of a poor artist's studio; but everything necessary to his comfort was there.

They entered the little kitchen and the sound of their entrance awoke the pale Carl, who lay stretched on his bed in the front room,

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"Is that you, Fred?" he called out sleepily.

Fred replied affirmatively, then sent Matilda in to see him, while he, himself, threw off his coat and his hat and walked up to one of the kitchen windows, from where he could see the lights of other homes.

Next to his kitchen was a small room, the walls of which were laden with all manner of shapes, sizes, and colors of books among which a row of leather-bound law books was the most conspicuous. In the center of the room stood a flat-top desk cluttered with open books, notebooks, and magazines.

Fred walked into his study, as he called it, lit the soft green light, opened the window, and fairly threw himself into the desk chair that stood near his desk. Through the open window, he looked out upon a sea of roofs, mere blocks of shadow, with interspersed faint and glaring lights. One small opening between two large buildings permitted a view of the Jersey shore on the other side of the Hudson. In the day time that view was but a strip of green foliage, at night the foliage turned to shadow, the small strip of water surface turned to sky, and the distant lights of the other shore twinkled like stars.

"I wish it hadn't happened to-night," he said to himself, looking at his books and papers, "I shouldn't have missed that nauseating lecture. When the quiz comes along, I won't know a thing about it. I suppose I wouldn't have known anything about it anyway. I ought to be brave enough to throw the whole thing overboard."

He rested his head on his left hand, elbow on the desk, and stared indifferently.

"Poor little wretch!" he thought, "fooling herself. There is no trying to tell her he's a hopeless consumptive. Anxious to bring little consumptives into the world. But, the devil take it, you can't blame her a bit.

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If we can stand for society's making consumptives out of potentially healthy, happy beings, why not suffer her bringing ready-made ones. And even when they manage to exist without being consumptives, they certainly can't be very strong or happy growing up in conditions of the sort she will be able to give them. As it is though, she will be able to get some pleasure out of her existence. Good people would call such reasoning immoral, and if the Board of Health knew of this, I suppose they'd interfere. Damn society and damn the Board of Health. Why don't they wipe out the conditions that breed fathers of consumptives. What a constitution the orphan asylum gave him—what help the shop has been giving that constitution since. We have no right to interfere with them. How much they need the little pleasures they may get! I'm going to help them.

"And that other poor devil," he went on thinking, referring to the young man, a father of a number of little wretches, who had been hurt at the shop, "I'm interfering there—interfering with the slaughter. Wish I were strong enough to interfere as I should like to. That little snob of a Donald! He'll tell Androon! I wish he would tell Androon, and I wish Androon would discharge me. I'd throw the whole blame business overboard—law-school and all."

He thought of the dreams he had had of seeing the world, and a queer feeling possessed him—a fear of some awful thing happening to him to make the realization of that dream impossible. He thought of the possibility of his getting hurt or of catching consumption from poor Carl. Suddenly he rose from his seat, dismissed his wild imaginings, brushed back his hair and went into the kitchen. There he made noise enough to be heard in the front room. Carl heard him and asked him to join them.

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"I want to make some lemonade," he called back.

"Oh, let me do it," cried Matilda, anxious to get the opportunity to show a bit of her culinary skill.

"With the greatest pleasure," said Fred when she was beside him; "here you will find everything I possess. Let's see what you can do. Don't mind these dirty dishes, we will wash them sometime to-night."

Fred left her in the kitchen and joined Carl who, with folded arms, sat on a black-cushioned morris-chair in the dimly lighted front room. His pale features, ghostly pale in the poor light and against the black leatherette of the chair, expressed a troubled state of mind. Carl's face had always been a serious looking one. The doctor's diagnosis had made that seriousness much more pronounced and had added to it a touch of despair, but Matilda loved him all the more for it. When Fred entered and saw the face and the smile in the wind-blown light, and considered the years and the kind of years in which they had grown up together, his sympathy for them became still more intense and he promised himself again that he would do all he could to help them, and that in spite of the misery that such a marriage would expose them to, he would encourage them to marry.

He seated himself on the chair that Matilda had occupied and gazed into Carl's face, while the latter gazed back at him, seriously a while, then smiled.

"What are you smiling about?" asked Fred.

"Maybe I won't smile by the time you get through telling me what you think about me, when I let you know what I'm smiling about."

"What do you care what I or anybody else may think about you?"

"I was just fooling."

"Then tell me what you are smiling about."

Carl looked in the direction of the kitchen to gauge

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the hearing distance between himself and Matilda, then turning to Fred said in a lowered voice, "I have decided to kick all our ideas overboard and, in spite of what I said, to get married."

"That's your privilege."

"I'm conscience-stricken, though, Fred."

"I don't see why you should be," Fred answered, experiencing considerable doubt about the wisdom of his position, in spite of the fact that it had seemed reasonable to him but a few minutes before.

"Well," Carl went on, hesitatingly, "I don't suppose I have the right to get married, sick as I am."

"Your getting married might help you very much in getting well."

"That's why I'm doing it, really," he cried, sitting up and bending forward, beaming with the gladness that Fred's unexpected agreement had given him; "there isn't much chance for me as I am. Just as Matilda says, to be cured a man in my condition must have everything just so. I can't get the care living as we do that she could give me. She says she is willing to economize on rooms and furniture and to spend what we earn on good food. Don't you think she's right? I feel rotten about it. It seems as if I am awfully selfish looking at it that way, but she says she is very unhappy as things are now and that no matter what will be, she will be much happier when we are together."

"Oh, I think so too," said Fred, trying hard to appear enthusiastic. "If you love each other you will be much happier and that alone ought to help you get well."

They sat silently for a few moments, Carl with his head bent gazing upon the floor, and Fred seemingly interested in the lights out doors, but frequently and

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furtively glancing at Carl, whose extreme unhappiness of the previous few weeks had given way to hope.

"You know," said the latter suddenly raising his head, "I don't believe that one girl out of a thousand would have acted as she did. I really expected her to be glad to get rid of me."

"She certainly is a lovely girl, there's no gainsaying that; but you have exaggerated your condition as I told you many times. There's more than one fellow in the shop there that is much weaker than you are. All you need is to take care of yourself a while."

"I'm going to take care of myself, all right, and as soon as I get strong enough to work a little harder, I am going to see that she stops working."

"Is she washing the dishes?" asked Fred suddenly sitting up and listening.

Without saying a word, Carl rose and hurried into the kitchen.

Fred settled himself back in his chair, leaning against the wall, as if he intended to spend a few hours that way, then, suddenly changing his mind, he rose and followed Carl into the kitchen.

Matilda had already quietly washed the stack of dirty dishes, had gathered all the cakes and sweets she could find, and was trying to make the table look nice.

The boys admired her work and she enjoyed their admiration and the three of them sat down about the table.

Carl and Matilda both beamed with happiness and Fred acted appropriately. They talked a long time, jested, laughed and planned, then the two of them began to worry lovingly about each other.

Matilda began to worry about Carl's staying up so late and wished to be allowed to go home alone; while Carl worried about Matilda's staying up so late since

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she had to get up early next morning, and wouldn't for all the world let her go home alone, helping her put on her light coat and going with her in spite of her protest.

Fred went to his study, intending to work. He read a few pages in one of the big leather-bound law books, then fell asleep.

CHAPTER II.

They gave themselves a little time in which to prepare for matrimony and incidentally to reflect upon the pros and cons of the venture.

Carl had been very happy the night he had promised to marry her, but as the days went by and he had done a considerable amount of reflecting, his enthusiasm began to wane. He began once more to look doubtfully upon the efficacy of all their plans and became morose and often most inconsiderate and irritable.

But they were married. The marriage ceremony was performed with Fred Kaye and Anna Blair as witnesses. To Fred it was a most distracting affair. The bride was nervous. The bridegroom evinced his persistent guilty conscience in the manner in which he performed his part of the ceremony from the placing of the cheap ring upon her finger and the kissing of his wife to the presentation of the fee.

It was a queer night. The weather was muggy. A threatening haze mystified the familiar shapes and lights of the New York streets. A heavy gloom was depressing each one of them, and each one tried to hide the effects of that gloom, with a fictitious gayety.

"Let's go to Androon and have the wedding sup-

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per," Fred insisted, and with no little hesitation and pain, Carl finally accepted.

The two girls started off ahead and Fred and Carl followed.

"I have no business to get married, Fred," Carl began when they were far enough behind the two girls to be able to speak without their hearing them. "Can't even pay for my own wedding supper."

"Oh, pshaw! Forget that, will you," cried Fred.

"Had to borrow the marriage fee!" Carl went on, unmindful of the friendly admonition.

"But you know very well that I thoroughly understood the whole situation. Consider this a part of my wedding gift. It's purely a business matter. Matilda and yourself are going into partnership so that you can—"

"Live a little longer," Carl interrupted.

"Yes, a little longer," Fred repeated impatiently, adding, "That is all any of us can do."

Carl sighed.

"That's all it is," Fred continued. "A business affair—a partnership. You know, once upon a time all life consisted of single or individual cells. They banded together by twos and threes and thousands to prolong life. That's what you and Matilda are doing. And you are justified in doing so. But take my advice, don't be such a confounded chump—don't stretch your face so much the long way. Be a man! That girl loves you. You should be the happiest fellow in the world."

"I wonder whether you would talk that way if you suddenly found yourself married on ten dollars a week —continual pains in your lungs—over half your salary to doctors and druggists."

"You ought to face all that with the determination

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to fight it out, not as though your knees are giving way under you."

"I'll fight it out if it can be fought out all right. It comes upon me sometimes, though, and makes me feel that if I don't express myself I'll just go crazy. I feel better now. You're right, Fred, I ought to fight it out and I will."

Matilda and Anna had reached Androon's cafe and restaurant and stood before the great window waiting for them. Matilda noticed the happier expression on Carl's face, when they arrived, and rejoiced in it; and when, in taking hold of her to usher her into the restaurant he squeezed her arm over tight, he lit up her pale, beautiful face with radiance.

"Come, Fred," said Anna who with him was following Carl and Matilda, "do take me by the arm and give me the pleasure of imagining it's me that's getting married."

"I have never yet refused to give any one pleasure when I found myself able to," said Fred, complying with her request.

"Well, you'll be doing exceptionally good in giving me this pleasure, for, you know, I'm doomed to be an old maid."

Fortunately they found the table behind the projection in the wall unoccupied and took their seats about it.

"Now this must be a very merry night. Who'll drink wine?" asked Fred.

"I don't think I better drink any," said Carl.

"I don't care for it," said Matilda.

"If it could make me m-a-r-r-y," said Anna shaking her head, "I would gladly take some."

"I have heard of people getting divorced because of wine," said Fred, "but I never heard of any one's

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marrying because of it. Since I am neither anxious to marry or to get divorced we won't order any."

The waiter appeared with soup and Carl said that it was his favorite kind.

"Wait till you taste some of the soups I'll make for you," said Matilda.

"And if he tells you that it is not as good as his mother used to make," put in Anna, "let us know and we won't do a thing to him."

"There's no need of fearing that," Carl replied, "my poor mother's been making soup in the hereafter too many years. Don't you believe that, Mattie, you'll have a great admirer of your cooking ability in me."

"I wonder what I'll be making in the hereafter?" asked Anna.

"Shirtsleeves," was Matilda's suggestion.

There were other suggestions and all well taken. They ate and drank and giggled till most of the restaurant patrons were gone. Then they had some tea.

"Let me tell you your fortune," cried Anna noticing the few pieces of tea leaf in Matilda's cup.

Matilda handed her the cup and moved closer to her.

"You have a wonderful life before you," she began.

"You're a fortune teller all right," muttered Carl, sarcastically.

Anna paid no attention to him.

"You will have one child. No, two children. No, no, that's wrong. You will have one child. He will be a great man. A prophet of some kind."

"Listen to her," cried Carl, "That's awful."

"He's going to make both of you very happy," she went on. "He's going to be loved by everybody—a comfort to my old maidenhood."

"Oh, come on," cried Matilda with affected dis-

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appointment, "that isn't what I wanted you to say. No, no, I don't want any prophet and you'll have an older comforter by that time."

"What you want is a good worker, who will help to make this world of ours a little better, isn't it?" said Fred.

"Yes, that's what I want," cried Matilda, "I wish you had told my fortune."

Carl leaned back in his chair, saying as he did so, "A great reformer, hey?"

"Something like that," said Matilda.

The desire to have a baby of her own never left Matilda. She had feared that Carl's unwillingness to bring unhappy children into the world would taboo even the oral dreaming of it. Now that he not only showed a willingness to listen without protest to the prophecy, even though it was but a jest, but participated in the dream, her happiness was complete.

They left the brilliantly lighted room. The waiter pocketed his tip and rapidly drove away at clearing the table. Every vestige of the wedding party soon disappeared. Even the floor was cleared of the last crumb that had fallen from it.

Androon's restaurant at that time was kept open no longer than two o'clock past midnight. Soon after they were gone, the lights, group by group, were put out, and the happy, brilliant, wedding scene was soon dark and deserted—a luminous spot to become faint and ever fainter, buried beneath days and weeks and years of strife.

CHAPTER III.

A week after the marriage Carl experienced a great lowering of his vitality and concerning his having taken a wife, felt like one who had started on a

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mad run without having seen the wall in his path until he had collided with it. Matilda sensed his condition and suffered humiliation, disappointment, regret. and despair; but she never spoke her feelings, concealing them deep down in her soul, summoning all her waning energies, meeting every frown on his face with a smile, hard as smiling came to her, doing nothing without deliberation, leaving undone anything that was apt to aggravate him, and leaving nothing undone that she thought might please or soothe him.

They were sitting in Fred Kaye's front room, one evening after work. Fred sat on his desk chair which he had brought from his study, Matilda sat near the little table, fumbling with some cards, and Carl was seated in the morris-chair, his hands clasped back of his head, his face distorted with worry.

"You ought to take a week off," said Fred thoughtfully, "and go about looking for rooms and the things you will have to have!"

"I don't see where we were," mutterd Carl, sending his ideas into the room, to no one in particular, "we rushed off and got married. What's the use of getting rooms when we haven't got a cent to get furniture with. I haven't been able to save a cent. I have nothing."

"But I told you that I have fifty dollars," said Matilda struggling to keep back her tears, "that will buy just what we have to have for a while."

"Fifty dollars won't get what you need," said Carl impatiently. "Besides, it's your fifty dollars. I had no business to get married. I have nothing to contribute. You're doing everything in this."

"Now look here, Carl," cried Fred, "you make me tired. You've become an old grumbler, grumbling all the time, no matter which way the wind blows. You're unreasonable."

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"You're the people that are unreasonable," he growled. "How in the world are we going to manage? We ought to start with at least three months rent paid. The fifty dollars will just about pay that, what furniture can we get?"

Fred folded his arms and sat silently for sometime, gazing first at one and then at the other of the two. He realized why they had considered their seeing him that night so urgent that it necessitated his losing another evening's lecture at the law school.

"Suppose I loan you fifty dollars," he began watching Matilda as she glanced at Carl, "You could pay it back to me in weekly payments. I won't need it until September when I enter Columbia to finish up for my degree."

"That will be great," cried Matilda, but Carl did not even change the expression on his face.

"I wanted to get you people a wedding present," Fred went on. "You can have the twenty-five dollars I intended spending on that, too."

"Don't be foolish, Fred," said Carl without looking up, "you need that money, you know you do."

"That's all right, I'll manage," insisted Fred.

"The loan is really present enough," added Matilda timorously.

"You have now," went on Fred ignoring the last remark, "with the fifty dollars that you have, a hundred and twenty-five dollars. You ought to be able to start house keeping on that."

"You better take a week off," began Carl addressing himself to Matilda after a few moments of silence, "so you can find the flat and buy the things we'll need."

"Why don't both of you take a week off?" asked Fred, "it won't harm you any and you won't lose so very much."

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"Not much," laughed Carl, "only two weeks salary."

"It will be worth it. You ought to have a rest."

"We ought to have lots of things," Carl commented.

"We ought to be happy anyway, don't you think so, dear?" suggested Matilda by way of admonishment.

"I suppose so," answered Carl, looking at her and trying to smile.

"I'll speak to Androon about giving you a week's vacation with pay," said Fred, "but you just ask for a week off without saying anything about his paying you. I will speak to him afterwards about it."

They continued planning a long time, Carl shedding his despondency as rapidly as he thought consistent, then they rose to go.

"I'm awfully sorry, Fred," began Matilda when she had her hat on, "that we kept you from school another evening."

"Don't worry about that," Fred answered, "I hope you are well started now, and that things will go more smoothly with you from now on."

"I wish I knew how we might thank you," she went on, "if it seems to you for a moment that we are not thankful for what you are doing for us, remember that we simply don't know how to show our thankfulness."

"I suppose I have acted like an unappreciative cuss," said Carl, "but you know how I feel about it, don't you, Fred?"

"You needn't explain," said Fred interrupting his attempt to do so, "I understand thoroughly, but don't make things harder than they are, by feeling so blue about everything."

There were tears of shame and gratitude in Carl's

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eyes, when he left the house to escort his wife home, and he wished ardently, as he descended the stairs hanging on to Matilda's arm that he could get himself to cease whimpering; but when he recalled over and over again all that Fred had said to him as well as the expressions of impatience and disapproval that he had seen on his face, he wished he could go off somewhere, where he would not be obliged ever to face him again.

Fred went into his study, carrying his desk chair with him, and sat down at his desk to work. He looked up his schedule and saw that he had missed the two lectures he was very anxious to hear, and in the disappointment of the moment threw the schedule down upon the desk, and muttered angrily, "I wish people were all able to fight their own battles."

"I don't envy her much," he went on thinking, his pen in his hand, his book open, "Oh, it is horrible! What a home that's going to be. But life has been no sweeter to them—they might as well."

He finally succeeded in driving the thoughts of Carl and Matilda from his mind, but he hadn't been at work more than a few moments when the bell rang. Thinking it Carl having returned, he merely pressed the door release button, and went back to his study. He had been there some time and had begun to wonder why it took him so long to come up, when a rap on the door told him that some one else had come.

He opened the door and admitted a middle-aged man on crutches, accompanied by a very poorly dressed woman. The man had pulled off his hat and was carrying it with one of the occupied hands. His hair was wet with perspiration and unkempt, and his wrinkled face was darkened by a neglected growth of beard. Distress and misery were written all over both their faces.

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Fred brought two chairs into his study and invited them to sit down there. With humiliation, meekness and gratitude, they took their seats and began, both at the same time, to explain their errand.

Fred needed no explanations. He was thoroughly acquainted and very much in sympathy with his case. It was a hopeless one.

"But look, Mr. Kaye," the woman began in broken English, half sobbing, "Mr. Denelli never was careless. He just went by carrying a big bundle of shirts into the press room, when the big box fell right down on his leg and ruined him for life. You know it is so."

Fred shook his head in agreement. He did know it was so and she had told him it was so a score of times.

"How can they lie like that?" she pleaded as if Fred constituted a part of *they*. "Mr. Denelli drinks sometimes a cup of wine or may be two, but he was never drunk in his life. Before the ambulance came, they gave him lots of brandy, then the doctor says he was drunk."

Mr. Denelli having been greatly weakened by the loss of his leg found himself unequal to his spouse in the telling of the story and relinquished the floor to her, merely nodding his weather-beaten face in agreement, after every point she emphasized.

Fred allowed her to finish her whole story because he knew it relieved her to do so, and as he had done at every time of the ten or twelve times they had come to see him, he handed her a two dollar bill and received for it her prayer that God bless him.

"Mrs. Denelli," he said as he gave her the money, "I am going to try very hard to win your case, but I'm afraid it is hopeless. He has a lot of dirty liars for witnesses while the workers are afraid to testify

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for Mr. Denelli. But listen, if I can get Androon to give him a hundred dollars, will you accept it?"

"Better than nothing," she answered with a sigh of resignation and showed an inclination to retell the whole story, but Fred interrupted her, by saying, "He could go into some little business with that."

She thanked him, weeping with gratitude. Denelli, the wreck of a man, perspiring with emotion, the suffering of his years in his face, muttered gruffly his thankfulness and the two departed.

Again Fred returned to his study but working was out of the question. He could see Denelli and his wife making their painful way home with the enormous sum of two dollars in their possession. It was somewhat of a relief to imagine her going into a grocery store on her way to buy some eatables; but what satisfaction could two dollars worth of food offer to two adults and five children for a period of a week or more. "Suppose she did earn a few cents a week, and suppose the oldest was but twelve years old?" he thought and remembered the dirty poverty stricken home he had seen immediately after the accident.

"The home was dirty," he told himself, "because the mother had spent her time helping Androon in the making of shirts while the dirt accumulated and the children grew." He remembered the five dirty, sickly youngsters with their big wet eyes and ragged clothes.

"What chances they have for getting their rightful share of joy out of life!" he cried aloud rising from his chair and walking across the room. "How can they endure it? How can the world stand for such things? What is the matter with people? Are they blind and deaf or are they so cruel and selfish? Beasts!"

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"I should have given them five dollars," he murmured audibly and sat down again, "but really I can't go on helping everybody like that, where will I land? Hugh! Here I am worrying about myself—children without a thing to eat! But darn it, darn it, darn it! I can't help everybody. Besides it'll drive me crazy. I can't eat anything myself—can't sleep, what's it all going to come to?"

"I suppose though," he went on opening a law book, "I have no right to eat or to enjoy eating, or enjoy anything, so long as there is so much misery. Damn the people who tell you you exaggerate—could things be worse? Queer thinking—telling you to be satisfied because others are miserable. They're crazy —they don't know what they say. Imagine being happy because others are worse off than you are, or because you aren't any worse off than they are. They're crazy that's all there is to it. They don't see, they don't hear, they don't think.

He rose again and paced the floor, his brain burning in his head, so it seemed. It was no ordinary headache, and for fear that something would happen to him, he turned his thoughts to his farm in the Catskills and wished Carl would return.

"What will I do when Carl goes to his new home. I mustn't remain alone. But it's just a little nervousness—I'll get over it. It's not a natural life I'm leading though. I ought to make a change. I used to dream of meeting many young people before I left the farm. I thought New York was all a paradise—everybody was happy. I'll never be happy living here —or anywhere, I'm afraid."

Suddenly the bell rang and soon Carl appeared. He looked very tired and sickly and seemed to try to avoid having to say anything.

As if all the agony of mind he had suffered had

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not been enough, Fred had to throw all his gloominess to the wind and go to Carl's rescue with an assumed light heartedness.

He finally succeeded in getting Carl to talk and laugh, and when the latter was asleep, he lay for hours rethinking his former thoughts, and struggling hard to drive them out of his mind.

CHAPTER IV.

They were given a week's leave of absence without pay, and entertained the hope that Fred would succeed in getting that pay for them.

Early on the day they had set aside for seeking a flat, they came before a five story tenement on West Ninth Street, a small alley-like street not far from Androon's shop, on the door frame of which they saw the sign, "Flat to let." They went in to inquire for particulars.

"Four rooms," said the Janitress, a very corpulent woman with an extremely kind face, red and dripping with perspiration, "Top floor left. Ten dollars."

"No bathroom?" said Matilda, instantly regretting having said it, as if she had suddenly realized that she had been hoggish and had asked for more than she was entitled to.

"A bathroom with four rooms for ten dollars?" cried the janitress as if such a thing had never been heard of.

Matilda blushed a little, but the janitress was kind enough to go off into another subject and relieve her.

"Just married, are ye'?" she asked addressing herself to Matilda, accentuating her utter disregard for Carl, "wish y' better luck'n I've had."

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Carl and Matilda both laughed, but Carl felt, in what she had said, a sting of admonition, and vaguely promised himself not to allow Matilda the cause to feel towards him as this woman evidently had cause to feel about her husband.

"Go up there and look at'm yourself," she said, speaking to Matilda and handing her the key, "Climbin' five flights of stairs is no easy thing for a fat old woman."

The way up, following sticky banisters, was hard and dark and odors crept out from different doorways and well nigh fought each other in the hallways. The hallway of the fifth floor was lighter than the others and the tenant who occupied one of its two flats, kept things cleaner than did her neighbors on the lower floors.

The transom above her door was curtained with a white lace-like material pulled in at the center by a light blue ribbon. The transom to the left was uncovered and dirty and they knew that within was the unoccupied flat.

The rooms were all very dirty, the floors were littered with rubbish and calcimine, and the wall paper on the walls was smeared and smoke stained. It took a strong imagination stimulated by the most intense emotion to see in that dirty barren flat the possibilities of a home, and Matilda had both. She cleared away the rubbish in the twinkling of an eye and with the same imagination, pictured all the ornamentations that would turn that dark, dreary, dirty catacomb into a cozy home, endeared as such to both of them.

As if afraid that something might step in between her and the realization of her dream, Matilda was anxious to take that very flat, the first they had come upon. She cited a number of cases where people she knew lived in flats that were not half so nice the rent

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of which was from twelve to fourteen dollars a month, and suggested that they pay in advance for four months.

"But why give it to her?" argued Carl. "We can put that much aside and hang on to it. Suppose you find a better place and want to move after you've been here a month? Or suppose you find after living here a while that there are many bad things about the place?"

Matilda had already furnished it, in her mind, and the very suggestion of its possible demolishment was almost painful to her; but she finally agreed that Carl's plan was the most practical.

"This is where your bed will stand," she showed him in the front room, "near these two windows. Here is where you will have to exercise every single day. See how healthy and strong you'll become."

"Think of it, Carl," she continued enthusiastically, leaning against him as he leaned against a window sill, "no more hall rooms—your own little home."

Carl put his arms around her and kissed her. He felt himself then to be truly fortunate to have the love of such a girl, and promised himself again not to let his ill-humor get the best of him.

"Let's figure out," he said with his arms still about her, and drawing her tightly to himself, "that means that we must put forty dollars away. I really think three months rent enough to put away."

Matilda was too happy to antagonize him.

"Thirty dollars then for rent. That leaves ninety-five dollars. We need—oh, we mustn't forget that Anna is going to stay with us—beds, a table, chairs, dishes, kitchen utensils, and so many little things. We haven't got so very much after all."

"Oh, I know a place where we can buy furniture

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and things very cheap," cried Matilda, looking up at him, "Its a lovely store."

"I wish we didn't have to have things other people have used."

"I know dear, but—. We can buy new dishes cheap, and we can buy new bed clothes; the other things really don't matter."

They planned things very carefully, then walking back over the litter on the different floors, and locking the door behind them, started down again.

The janitress accepted the ten dollars and tore off the "flat-to-let" sign, and, together they struck out for the "lovely" store to supply their dearly beloved little home, as they had supplied themselves throughout their lives before—with the cheapest they could get.

CHAPTER V.

Three days after the flat was rented the little home was completely furnished and in an inhabitable condition. Both Anna and Fred had been requested not to come until everything was in perfect order. On the fourth day, Matilda, with Carl's most efficient and willing help, prepared what they called their *real wedding supper*, and Anna and Fred alone were invited to partake of it. Anna had been requested not to say a word about it to any of their friends in the shop, some of whom they would gladly have invited, but for the expenditure it would necessitate.

Both guests arrived at the same time, having been asked to come directly from the shop.

"You really are a wonder, Matilda," said Fred, looking about the little dining-room with its table all set and sparkling, "I was sure you would be able to

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fix up a neat little place, but I never thought you could do as well as this."

Anna was beside herself with enthusiastic admiration. She examined everything most carefully and commented upon everything she beheld with flattering superlatives.

What they had of second-hand furniture merely made the place look like a long established home. The ten-cent store pictures on the wall, looked like great paintings; and the owners of fashionable homes could not have been as proud of their "originals" as Matilda was of these.

The most conspicuous piece of furniture in the front room, the poor man's parlor, was white spread iron bed. Matilda made sure that Fred noted that it was right up against the window, where Carl would be sure to get plenty of fresh air.

Anna asked Matilda for the privilege of helping her serve, but Matilda refused to allow her to do so.

Anna sat down into her chair like an angry child and pouted.

"When I give my wedding supper, I won't let you serve either," she said and then straightened up again.

"When is that going to be?" demanded Carl whose face beamed with a radiance his friends had never seen there.

"As soon as I can get a fellow, of course."

"Oh, pshaw!" said Carl with an expression of disappointment, "that is liable to be a long way off yet."

"That is very nice of you," said Anna assuming to be angry, "If you were a real good friend of mine, you'd get one for me."

"He got into trouble enough getting one for me." put in Matilda serving soup, and watching his face to see how he took her remark.

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"If you can make soup as good as this," said Fred, "I don't see why we shouldn't be able to have that wedding supper in a very short time."

"I'll tell you what I'll do," said Anna addressing Fred, "after I come to live here, I will make supper for you some evening, if you will promise that if the soup is as good as this is, you'll try to get a fellow for me."

"All right," agreed Fred, "I promise."

When the other courses appeared they found them equally as good, at least they spared no words to make Matilda think that they did.

Fred had brought with him two pounds of very good assorted chocolates and Anna brought a pound of old fashioned taffy and together with some fruit and a second pot of coffee, they had material enough for another spread later in the evening.

They talked a long time, played a number of games of cards, and on the whole spent an exceptionally pleasant evening, all seemed to be extremely happy, yet the resultant state of mind of each was vastly different from that of the other.

Matilda was excited, flushed, rather tired and very happy. Carl was tired, happier than he had been for some time, but with it all weighed down by doubts and the feeling that all this show had been borrowed, and that had it all been his own he could have been very happy. Poor Anna was envious. She laughed and smiled and jested a great deal, and in her show of happiness had been almost boisterous, but at heart a little voice kept incessantly complaining of the irksomeness of shop work, of the utter desolation of her life, and lauding to exaggeration the joy of having a home of one's own.

Fred was tired. Unconsciously he had played a dual part and as always when he did so, he wore him-

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self out. He had jested and freely partaken of everything till it seemed that he had completely lost himself in the joys of the humble festivity, but beneath the surface of his gladness was a great weight, which had begun to accumulate with a single aversion and a single longing and had ended, when the noise and light went out in departure, in dejection and weariness. He became conscious of his affectation and it became unbearable.

He took Anna home and in doing so was obliged to pass through a series of slum streets, littered with garbage, dirt, and ashes; and swarming with sick and hungry-looking cats and dogs, who fed upon the refuse of the poor and looked it in every limb. They met and encountered many men and women in spite of the lateness of the hour. Some were going home from other festivities, sleepily, and others continued their merry-making as they went, filling the narrow man made cañons with the echoes of their hilariousness. Some hurried over the dirty walks for business purposes, and others tramped the streets because they had nothing else to do and no where else to go.

Anna clung to him as they walked along, and he held her arm and was very sorry for her. Every one of the expressions which he had seen upon her face during the evening he remembered and analyzed, putting himself in her place in all his considerations. Instead of censuring her, as most good people should have done, for desiring to passionately to get married and for showing her desire so unmistakably in everything she said and did, his heart went out to her.

She on the other hand, was thinking of him, as she walked silently and allowed her thoughts to flare up into a dream, then called herself "poor little fool," and burst the bubble she had made. When she became fully aware of just what she had allowed herself to

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dream about, and thought of the utter impossibility of the realization of that dream she tried to justify herself for having taken the license, and at the same time to deny having taken it, as if even she herself, was afraid of the very idea. "It wasn't exactly Fred, nor was it just the desire to get hold of a man. It's oh, this emptyness! This lonliness that I am so sick of, and am really getting to be afraid of! To have a home. To belong to something, and somewhere. Oh, this horrible, unbearable floating through life."

"Well, Anna," said Fred, after a long pause of silence, "You'll be next."

"Me," she laughed, "don't worry. Not so soon."

"You can't tell. These things come upon us suddenly."

"It won't come upon me so suddenly. I won't be shocked."

"You can't tell. These things come when we least expect them."

"I'm not fooling myself about it. You look for either of two things in a girl. Woe unto the girl like myself that has neither."

"That isn't always true."

"No you fellows hate to admit it. The poorest man wants a good-looking wife if he can't get the money."

They reached the tenement in which she lived.

"All things come to him who waits," he asked her to remember and left, ashamed of his platitudinous consolation, adding to himself as he walked away, "What a lie it is."

He felt very much relieved to be alone. He felt as if they had all hung about his neck like dead weight and he had gotten rid of them; yet, even though he enjoyed the sensations of being free, for the moment, he could not forget her in her dirty, lonely room, lying

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awake in her bed, thinking and moping, and the weight came back upon him.

His rooms were dead silent. Now that Carl was gone, he slept in the front room again. Through the two windows, poured the yellow glare from the street below and without adding any light to it, he undressed and went to bed.

"She is right," he said to himself, drawing the blanket up over his exposed shoulder, "Even I who think I understand and feel so much, who profess to be a sincere believer, a worshiper of the purest democracy, would be much more interested in her if she were a beautiful girl. It is unjust, it is mean, it is cruel, it is rotten, but it's true, nevertheless; and what can you do about it?"

CHAPTER VI.

The week's rest from toiling in the shop, though spent in work almost as hard, had had a marked effect upon both Carl and Matilda. Carl forgot the pains in his lungs that had come at most regular intervals before he had taken his vacation, and Matilda's cheeks gained some of the pink they needed to do justice to the well formed features of her face.

On Monday morning they responded to the call of the whistle rather cheerily, but when Matilda entered the shop and encountered the glances of her friends and shop mates, and received their variedly enthusiastic congratulations, she wished it were possible for her to give up her place at the machine, as a married woman should. The thought annoyed her considerably throughout the day, but she learned to drive it out of her mind and to replace it with happier thoughts of her home.

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Cari said very little as was usual with him, but the effects of his thoughts stimulated by the various questions of his fellow workers, soon showed themselves on his face and in his bearing. After a week's work, he began to feel the pain in his lungs, again, but he had resolved to say no more about his ailments to any one and lived up to his resolutions.

"I'm a husband now," he would say to himself, many times during his work day, "and should be keeping my wife at home instead of dragging her along with me. She didn't get much by marrying me."

The thought that his comrade workers might be thinking about him in just that way, added to his usual moroseness.

Anna took the room nearest to the kitchen and, with the promise to help with dish-washing and other light duties of housekeeping when ever she could, she was to board with them for three dollars a week.

With but few exceptions, every night before going to bed and every morning before breakfast during the first few weeks of his married life, Carl performed the exercises prescribed by his doctor. One evening he forgot to wind his alarm clock; as a result they woke late next morning, and without stopping for breakfast they were obliged to hurry to the shop. Nor did he exercise that evening, pleading that he happened to be too weak and tired. Next morning he performed them without much enthusiasm and every morning and every evening after that, his enthusiasm seemed to lose in strength. He began to find excuses for avoiding the evercises and finally decided that they didn't do him much good anyway; and the double work of home and shop so enervated Matilda, that although she remonstrated with him a long time not to neglect them, she finally ceased bothering him.

Anna was a lovely girl. She helped a great deal,

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but she was so discontented with her lot, she unconsciously added to the gloom of the little home.

Winter passed and summer came again. Often after dish-washing in the summer evenings, Matilda would sit down on the rocker, when Anna and Carl were asleep and contemplate her condition, the change brought about by her marriage, and what she might look forward to in the dim uncertain future. As the days of her maidenhood receded, she forgot the intensity of her girlhood agonies and picked from the dark stretch of time that was, the luminous moments, few as they had been, and dwelt upon them. Married life was not what it had appeared to be, yet, she argued, if there was some means for relieving the awful burden of poverty it would not be so bad, it might be very good.

One afternoon in the early part of August, Anna became very ill and was compelled to leave her machine. Matilda took her home. She had been taken with severe headaches and was forced to go to bed. When Carl came home from work that evening, he was sent to summon the doctor.

The doctor came and said that he feared it was typhoid fever. She was given a number of prescriptions all of which cost considerably and the unlooked-for expense worried her and detracted from the value of the medicine, if it had any value.

"Do you think it is very serious?" Carl asked the doctor, who was folding up the dollar bill poor Anna had worked so hard to earn.

"I'm afraid it is," he answered, "should she get any worse by midnight, you had better call me again."

"She has been complaining of severe headaches for several days now."

"Why didn't you call me before?"

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Well, we didn't think it was more than just headaches."

"When one gets severe headaches for several days at a stretch, one should not neglect it. But that is the way with you people. You don't want to spend the dollar for the doctor and wait till you just have to, till it is almost too late."

"No, we don't care to make you doctors rich unless we have to," Carl retorted.

The doctor shrugged his shoulders, repeated his instructions and left.

There was no gas jet in Anna's room. A kerosene lamp was lit to help the sickly light that streamed in from the kitchen. But Anna complained of the unbearable smell of the kerosene, and the lamp was removed.

She lay silently upon her bed all evening, a wet rag about her forehead, her eyes on the ugly green calcimine on the walls. Towards midnight she grew very much worse and towards dawn she was borne away in an ambulance to the free ward of the city hospital.

Carl and Matilda ate their breakfast in silence that morning, and began the day's work, already worn out.

Matilda watched the endless stream of cloth while the desire to sleep grew upon her more and more irresistible. Many times during the day she fell asleep and each time almost instantly roused herself. One time she did not rouse herself at once and out of pity, no one bothered her. The foreman was not about. She slept about fifteen minutes then woke with a start, her mind burning with the fear of her dream—the fear that she had committed some dreadful crime. When she was fully awakened, she was relieved by the assur-

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ance that it had but been a dream and that there really was no punishment to expect and to fear.

She went at her work with renewed energy, thinking as she worked. Her body demanded sleep, her mind was filled with sympathy for her unfortunate friend; and as a consequence of the conditions of both, her soul was loaded down with a musical sadness. She thought, and thought, and thought throughout the long dragging hours. One thought followed the other very rapidly, and all centered about Anna and Carl.

She supposed Anna's possible death and Carl's and wondered what would happen to her should her suppositions come true. Her imaginative mind picturing the taking place of what she supposed, and then like the child that draws upon its slate the pictures of its fancy and rubs them all out she drove her fears away with hope—she cleared her slate, as it were, and began to draw over again.

She hoped she would become a mother. She hoped even as she had always hoped, that she would have a boy who through her self-sacrifice would grow up strong and healthy and be in turn a source of strength to her. In fact she saw that that was her only hope, that without a son she would have to work in that shop until she died. The thought of having a boy of her own was the most glorious and hopeful thought that ever entered her mind. She thought of all she could do for him and the work she saw herself doing in order that she might buy plenty of milk and fresh eggs to feed him so that he should grow as strong as she hoped he would be, was much less irksome than the work she was doing. She had forgotten that she had dreamed about her husband as she was now dreaming about her son. She became so certain that things would come about just as she pictured them,

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that she gave her whole mind up to prayer for his coming, without noticing the time till a sudden darkness came upon the city and the electric lights in the shop were turned on.

A noisy shower poured down for half an hour and when it was over a golden evening light had come and soon after the six o'clock whistle blew.

"Did you see Fred?" was Matilda's question as soon as she saw Carl.

"Yes, I just saw him," said Carl. "He was in a great hurry."

"Did he telephone?"

"Yes, they said 'she was doing fairly well.' "

Out doors the sidewalks were still wet and the air was moist and fresh, the shower having cleansed it. The sky was perfectly clear. They passed the gray-walled orphanage and stopped near the gate, while a stream of youngsters, returning from an hour's sojourn on the river side, poured back into the gloomy building. They were wet, having been caught in the shower and were anxious to get in, and Carl and Matilda stood there smiling upon the many little faces made so different from the ordinary children's faces by the stamp of the institution. Matilda pointed out one little girl that looked like Anna used to look—poor Anna—when they were children there. She told of some of the funny things that Anna used to do on account of which she was so often in trouble, and then they went home dwelling on the thousand memories that the sight brought back to them.

"How long is it since you've been in there?" asked Matilda when they were some distance off, and the orphanage was hidden from their view.

"I went back there once about a year after I left," said Carl, "and that's nearly ten years ago."

"It is eight years since I've been there."

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"My life was none too sweet for me there," said Carl, "I used to wish my mother had taken me with her. They gave it to me!"

"Oh, I remember how I used to suffer to hear you and poor red-headed Martin crying. You kids were yelling all the time. And we were always so sorry for you. Poor Anna, she used to think an awful lot of you. She thought more of you than I did."

"We must go to see her Sunday," muttered Carl, moved.

"Couldn't we manage to see her to-morrow night?"

"No, no. They told Fred you can only visit the free ward on Sunday."

"What happened to Fred?"

"I don't know. He seemed to be very busy. He wasn't there at all at noon."

Matilda stopped at a grocery store to buy a few things and Carl went home. He found the flat upset as it had been left and took to straightening matters out. Matilda arrived soon after with some packages on her arms and began preparations for supper.

Carl opened all the windows and a draught of moisture-laden wind poured through the little flat. He seemed to enjoy it as it tore through the rooms and, to Matilda who stood by the little gas stove cooking her supper, it was like a breath of hope, coming from some distant land in the future.

The place was soon in order again and the odor of cooking food, the supper table with the lovely breeze blowing over it and the feeling of solidity which he got from contrasting his condition with Anna's, filled Carl with gratitude. Anna was alone—floating, as she often said—he had a home and a little wife who loved him. He walked up to where Matilda

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was standing gazing down upon a steaming pot, a big spoon in one hand and the cover of the pot in the other, put his arms about her aproned waist, pressed her tight to him, and kissed her up-turned steam-moistened face.

"Poor Anna," she said.

"People who have typhoid get stouter once they get well."

"Not when they have to go right back to work."

After supper Carl attempted to help Matilda with the dish-washing, but he soon became so sleepy that she refused to allow him to remain in the kitchen and drove him off to bed. The desire to sleep had left her. She had some very important sewing to do and as soon as all the dishes and the table had been attended to, she got her material, and sat down in her rocker to sew and think of Anna.

She was going to put her work away at half-past nine and go to bed when she heard a knock on the door, and opening it, admitted Fred.

He seemed to be very much worried and tired out.

"I'm all out of breath," he said, seating himself in the rocker, "I was afraid you'd be in bed before I got back from school."

"Why? What is the matter?"

"Nothing. I wanted to find out more about Anna."

"What made you run off in such a hurry at six o'clock?"

"Oh, I'm having a lot of trouble with Androon. Denelli's lost his case."

"How much did he sue for?"

"He sued for a thousand, but that isn't the question. He would have had to give half of that to his lawyer anyway; but the injustice of it! It was purely

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a case of false witness. The witnesses all swore to lies and those who could have helped him were afraid to go for fear of losing their jobs. Imagine Barney, that little snipe, and Williams testifying against Androon! Think of a court of justice taking an oath from Donald. Donald who hopes to join Androon in partnership. I got hold of Androon and made him give the fellow a couple of dollars, at least, which he refused to do till I had a fight with him and threatened to expose him."

"Did he get frightened?"

"No! Frightened! I made a fool break in threatening Androon. He isn't afraid of an exposure. I couldn't get the witness, besides I am certain that there isn't a judge in the district that would allow anything to harm Androon. I suppose they'd put me in jail for trying it. At any rate, after a very long argument, in which I lost my job, he promised to give him fifty dollars as a bit of charity."

"Lost your job?" cried Matilda, visibly alarmed.

"I did hope to keep it till October when I will enter Columbia, but what's the difference."

"Oh, that's so. You enter Columbia in the day time, don't you?" asked Matilda very much worried about the sudden change of affairs.

"Yes. But I got fifty out of him. And oh, say, you know Donald—this is really funny—I got twenty-five out of him, too. I wouldn't go till he gave me a check. I don't think he'd ever give anybody twenty-five cents, unless he was actually forced to. What a fight I had. I'll bet he's swearing away at me now."

"That is funny."

"You see, now I have seventy-five dollars for him, and I'm going to add twenty-five myself to it, and let him have a hundred. I promised to get that much for him."

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"How much you take upon yourself."

"But tell me all about poor little Anna. I rushed over here to get some information about her, and here I'm talking you to death about Denelli. Tell me, how did it all happen?"

"I'm sure I don't know. She's been very unhappy the last few weeks, moping all the time. Sunday evening she began to complain of very severe headaches. Yesterday, as you know, she had to leave the shop in the afternoon. In the evening we sent for the doctor. She seemed to be all right, but at about midnight, she began to talk and scream in delirium. Carl went for the doctor again, and as soon as the doctor saw her, he sent for the ambulance and she was taken away."

"We'll have to do something for her, when she gets out. She mustn't go back to the shop till she's strong enough."

"She won't get so very strong resting here, by herself."

"Well, I'm thinking I can take her up to my home in the Catskills for a while."

"That would be great."

"Mother will take good care of her. She can stay a month or more.

Matilda thought of the three dollars a week she had hoped to get from Anna. "I don't know whether she can stay there as long as that, but even if she went up there for a week or two, it would do her much good."

"Well, she can stay as long as she wants to, as far as we're concerned. Will is the only one there besides my mother. There's plenty of room."

"She's a lucky girl after all," said Matilda shaking her head. "It will surely do her a world of good."

They were silent for a few minutes then Fred

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jumped up. "You were up all last night. You better go to bed."

"No, stay a little while yet. I am really too tired to be able to sleep."

"How does Carl feel, lately?"

"Oh, about the same as usual. One day he feels good, the next he is gloomy, and so it goes."

"What does he get gloomy over now?"

"Oh, Fred, he feels terrible about what he owes you. Here you're going to enter Columbia and you need your money. I don't see how we can even think of paying you now."

"I guess I'll manage."

"There's no use of talking about it, because we simply can't pay it now, but let me tell you I've lain awake many a night crying over it."

"You were very foolish."

"You need it and you ought to have it. It isn't fair. I tell you I often think, I wanted to be married and have a home. Married life is all right, but oh, the worries. One week it's dentist, next week it's glasses. It's just terrible. Then winter will soon be coming and it's coal bills and clothes and doctor bills! It's like beating against the waves of the ocean. There's no escaping, you go under no matter what you do. Debts constantly accumulate. We just don't earn enough to live on. The expense is greater than the income. It's a failing business—we're always bankrupt."

"I guess we're all bankrupt. Society is bankrupt. I suppose Anna's getting sick takes away what help she was."

"Sure! You see I wasn't counting on that!"

"Well, don't worry about it. You have managed to live through all kinds of things up to now, you'll

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find a way out of this, too. You better go to bed. You have to get up early."

"Yes, and I didn't tell you," she said to herself when Fred was gone, thinking of the possibility of the coming of the "son." "I wonder what he'd say, if I told him? More doctor bills! Suppose Carl get's sick and has to stop working? Without Anna's help, I'd be in a nice fix going to bed for two weeks."

She put out the light and started for bed sighing as she went.

"I suppose I'll have to do *that*," she said with almost a groan, thinking of the story that the woman next door had told her. The story was about a woman who, not wishing to have a child she was bearing, purposely fell while she was hanging out clothes. She remembered the words the woman had used. "It worked! It worked, all right."

How disgusting and how frightful the idea was to her. She hated to talk to her neighbor after that.

She wiped the tears from her eyes with her petticoat and went to bed.

CHAPTER VII.

Anna lay in delirium, upon her cot in the free ward of the City Hospital. Matilda came to see her every Sunday and twice Carl and Fred went with her. Usually they sat through the visiting hour and stared down the long rows of cots, each with its own peculiar bundle of mental and physical agony; for Anna, her form showing beautifully under the white spread, tucked under her on both sides, said a great deal of unbearable nonsense. The fourth Sunday the three of them were there. Anna recognized them and showed great pleasure in seeing them. She talked

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quite rationally for a long time, telling them of the kind of treatment she received, then, suddenly, went off into a story about a green nut shell that she had cut into narrow strips several miles long and that she had afterwards done into very many shirt sleeves.

"If you make the backs and fronts," she insisted, "we will have many good shirts—lovely material."

She kept repeating the story, varying it each time, till the nurse came along and told her not to talk so much.

They sat silently watching her a while longer then went home.

At the end of the following week, Anna was very much better, by no means completely recovered; but there were many waiting for her bed as there had been many waiting for her job, and, in Matilda's care, she was discharged and taken home in a rickety old cab.

A crowd gathered in front of the tenement when the cab arrived and giddy as poor Anna was, she enjoyed the idea of being the center of attention.

Climbing the five flights of stairs had a tiring effect upon her and when she reached the flat, she was completely exhausted. She fell into the rocker and sat some minutes unable to speak.

She expressed her great delight, when she could, at being home again, and begged for food.

"I'm starved," she kept crying. "Oo! what stuff they give you!"

After supper Fred arrived and they sat down to talk matters over.

"I'm going to stay right here and rest for a week," she said with emphatic decision, "and then I'm going to ask Androon for my job."

"You can't go to work next week," argued Fred, "you aren't strong enough to go to work."

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"I will be then," she insisted.

"You won't be strong enough to go to work next month," growled Carl, still seated at the table, his shoulders rounded to where his head almost touched the glass that stood before him.

"For heaven's sake," cried Matilda, whose attention he had attracted by his remark, "straighten up. Look how round-shouldered you're getting. You ought to rest a month yourself."

"I'll wait till I get all that's coming to me in a bunch—eternity," he replied, smiling cynically.

"Androon has somebody in your place," said Fred assuringly, addressing himself to Anna. "Don't worry about him."

"I'm not worrying about Androon, let me tell you. I'm just plainly worrying about myself. I've decided to go to work just as soon as I can and begin to *save*. I had a nice little smell of death, and I'm not going to trust myself again to the free ward of the City Hospital."

"You had plenty of time to plan all that, didn't you?" put in Carl, this time making an effort to straighten his back.

"You're going out to my home in the Catskills," said Fred, ending the argument with this authoritative decision.

"I am?"

"I have made all arrangements with my mother."

Anna was completely overwhelmed. She had no idea in her mind of the proper way to respond. She was afraid to show the extent of her joy, and yet felt duty-bound to manifest some kind of appreciation. She said a number of things intending to show her gratitude and, at the same time, to hide her excessive delight; but in the latter attempt, she failed com-

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pletely. No matter what she said or did, her extreme happiness showed itself.

Several times she was about to ask him whether he was going out there with her, but each time thought it better to wait, hoping that he would himself give her that information; but after a long discussion on the best way of going there and the beauty of the Catskills, nothing had been said to indicate whether he was to accompany her or not, and she began to fear that they would enter upon a new subject in their conversation.

"Do you suppose I can find it myself?" she asked with affected calmness.

"Oh, no, I'll go with you," said Fred.

"So you will see the Catskills," said Matilda unwittingly coming to her rescue for she was about to burst into laughter for sheer delight. "Remember when we got a tiny taste of it when we were kids—fresh air kids? Remember that week? I'll never forget it."

"The dear, dear Catskills," exclaimed Anna, "I'm glad I was sick."

"You remind me of poor Florence," said Matilda with a sigh. "You remember how she hoped she really had consumption so they would send her away. Remember Agnes telling how when she came into the office of the Charity Society she was afraid that in the examination they'd find out that she didn't have it and that they wouldn't then send her away?"

Every one remembered, but further discussion on the subject was discouraged by the expression on Carl's face.

They spent most of the evening making definite arrangements, deciding to leave for the Catskills on the morrow, then, after giving a detailed account of the treatment she received at the hospital and the

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different feelings she had experienced at different times during her illness, Anna became very sleepy and Fred immediately departed.

CHAPTER VIII.

Anna and Fred arrived at the village of Catskill early in the afternoon, a few days later, and took the tiny mountain train for the heart of the hills. The little thing rattled on, grinding sharply over its narrow tracks, puffing out great puffs of rolling smoke, swishing into rocky tunnels with deafening noise, then gliding out into the most fascinating open spaces with verdure of various hues, touched up here and there with smiling patches of water or gray and purple rocks. Above everything, running swiftly along with them, and ever before them was the intensely blue spell-binding range of the Catskills.

They arrived at Cairo and alighted.

Poor Anna! Her senses throbbed and beat as thousands of sensations hurled through the fairyland space struck and excited them. Strange sounds and echoes of sounds, such as she had never heard, enlivened the atmosphere. Her nostrils were forced to expand in the effort to inhale the rich odors that came from everywhere. The few passengers who had come with them had scattered instantly and they were left alone. Even the station master, after greeting Fred with intimate and commonplace remarks, locked up the little depot, and disappeared.

Soon Fred spied his brother in a rickety, mud bespattered two-seated buggy, working hard in his efforts to make the poor old animal he was driving, do justice to his desire to get there in time.

The two brothers greeted each other affectionately

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and Fred introduced the lanky farmer, William, to Anna, who was trying very hard to keep off her face the disappointment she keenly felt. She had pictured Fred's home to be like one she had seen in a picture, and had expected Fred's brother to arrive in a beautiful carriage pulled by dashing restless horses.

When they reached the outskirts of the village, where few people were seen, the frankness of nature inspired her with a sense of indifference to appearances, and she waxed enthusiastic over everything.

Their road lay over a red iron bridge and when they reached the center of it, Fred asked William to stop for a moment.

Many feet below that bridge a gurgling noisy creek made its way over a bed of smooth-surfaced rock with many hollows, indentations and cracks. It seemed to rise where two very dense strips of woodland met, in the west, and, above that meeting point, above the tallest of the many dark green pines, stood the most imposing of the Catskill mountains. The sun had already gone down, but in the beautiful valley, the end of the day was still light. With the gurgling water was mingled the sound of barking dogs, lowing cattle and the occasional report of a gun.

They went on and a very few minutes later arrived before a white little house by the road side. It was much more modest than she had hoped it would be, but she was delighted with it.

A middle-sized, middle-aged, motherly woman, extremely neat, and wearing spectacles, came out to greet them; while a red shaggy-haired dog, chained to a tree near his kennel, barked and fumed and kept throwing himself forward, the chain's length, till Anna thought he'd choke himself.

Mrs. Kaye's little home, within, from the kitchen

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to the attic, was as neat and clean as was Mrs. Kaye herself, and this cleanliness and neatness inspired Anna with an admiration that was infinitely superior to the admiration she would have had, had she found Fred's home to be what she had pictured it. She was not conscious of this change of feeling. She was so taken up with what she saw that she forgot that she had been disappointed.

Mrs. Kaye's kindness, too, overwhelmed Anna. The dear woman hurried about the little house, showing in every move she made, the joy she took in serving them. She took Anna's wraps from her and conducted her into the lovely little parlor, old fashioned enough to have the indispensable organ as well as the family pictures on the walls, but modern enough to lack the close musty odor that is invariably a part of the old country parlor.

Mrs. Kaye then escorted Anna up to the little room up stairs where she washed and prepared herself for supper. When through they went below and having been made to feel at home, Anna followed Mrs. Kaye into the kitchen. Mrs. Kaye would not, however, allow her to make herself useful, as she wanted to.

Anna's face was now beaming with delight. She kept "thanking her lucky stars," for being fortunate enough to have been sick. She walked up to the back door way and looked out. Night had already fallen and the darkness under the trees in the orchard was very thick and fear inspiring. She heard Fred's voice. He was talking to the dog who growled and groaned as if in agonizing uncertainty. She called to him.

"Come out here," Fred called back.

"I'm afraid," she answered. "Come for me."

Fred came for her and taking her by the arm helped her across the yard to where Nero was, still growling in an undertone.

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"Think of it," said Fred almost sadly, "this dog used to fairly knock me over with delight whenever he saw me. He simply will not make friends with me now. That's what the chain does to creatures."

"How long is it since you've been here?" asked Anna.

"Five years now, but I come out as often as I can, usually during holidays."

Mrs. Kaye began calling them to supper and slowly they made their way back, Fred promising that within a day or two Nero and he would be friends again, while Anna, without hearing a word he said, went into ecstacy over the kitchen light as it poured out of the cheese cloth screen on the kitchen window and threw fantastic shadows on the gravel.

After supper, in spite of remonstrances on the part of Fred and his mother, Anna insisted on going for a little walk. The air was so lovely, the night so peaceful, she wouldn't think of going to sleep without having gone for a little stroll.

Fred left his coat in the kitchen and rolled the sleeves of his shirt way up over the elbows. Anna put on a heavy white sweater belonging to Fred, and they started out.

"Aren't you cold?" she asked when they had already walked a short distance.

"It *is* a little chillier than I thought it would be, but it won't hurt me. It will do me good."

"Let me take your arm, then," she said. "I'll keep that one warm at least, and when the other gets cold, you can go to the other side.

Fred gave her his arm willingly. Not because it was Anna, but because there, in that night so full of associations, he craved the warmth and the touch of a human being. He wished to talk and to be heard. The vivid associations had ignited the desire for ex-

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pression and, had he taken that walk alone, he would have talked aloud to himself.

"How many times I have walked down this road," he said, filling his lungs with air, and exhaling it in a pain-fraught sigh. "The five years seem to me like fifty. I fled from this place, glad to get away. I'm beginning to think of it emotionally."

They walked on silently for a while, Anna breathing deeply and acting as if she wanted to speak but was afraid to.

"Oh, what's that?" she cried suddenly, hearing a steady, beating melancholy sound coming from the depths of the woods.

"That's a whip-poor-will," he answered, and they went on.

They came to the red iron bridge and the wonderful, peaceful beauty of the water, the trees and the mountains, captivated her. She stood against the railing, almost dizzy with emotion.

"Look, Anna," said Fred, in whose heart there was so much awakened. "Below there, near the foundation of this thing, there's a rock where we used to sit for hours, on nights like this, and look out upon the water and listen to its gurgling."

"Let's go down there."

He took her arm and they made their way down, seating themselves comfortably on the rock, Fred sitting somewhat below her.

He had had one love affair in his life and every word of its story sounded with the rippling of that stream, and every sensation to which his craving mind clung was brought back by the water's sky reflection, by what could be seen of the gray rocks, by the massive shadows of the woodland strips, and by the desolate mountain peaks, the dominant element in the stuff of his mind, woven into it by the law of growth. He

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wished he could tell her what made him feel as he felt, and decided to try, the desire for expression was so urgent, but he bethought himself and again merely sighed and tried to still his desire.

She moved closer to him and the touch of her skirt blew up the flame again, and without being fully aware of what he was doing, his head fell into Anna's lap. She gently touched his forehead with her fingers and brushed his hair back. A feeling of contentment possessed him.

The fever in his mind had brought illusions before his senses, and he was as much mistaken about her, as she was mistaken about his conduct.

A great desire possessed him—the desire that had driven him from his home—the desire to do, to accomplish and to loom big in the eyes he could not forget, however, much he told himself that "it was foolish!" The desire moved him. Unable to remain there he roused himself, and they started for home.

When his mother had ceased scolding him for having kept the poor girl out so late, and Anna had been put to bed by Mrs. Kaye, he quietly stole out again and returned to the rock under the bridge.

For a long time he sat there telling himself that he was very foolish about the whole thing, then started for home again intending to go to bed as soon as he reached his little room, but associations clung to things in there as they clung to the bridge, the rocks, the creek, and the mountains. Instead of going to bed he pulled from a corner a strong wooden box, and unlocked it. Brushing about the heap of letters it contained with his fingers he soon felt a small cardboard box and anxiously pulled it out.

Among the bundle of letters he had received there was one—the last he had started to write to her, but had never sent. He took that first and began to read.

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"What a fool," he exclaimed after reading the first page, folded it again, replaced the whole thing in the corner, and began preparing for bed, when he heard his brother's footsteps in the hallway.

"Come on in, Bill," he said eagerly, opening the door.

"I heard you walkin' around," said Bill, entering and seating himself in the rocker, "an' thought maybe you couldn't sleep, for some reason or ruther."

"Oh, no! I have nothing worrying me much," said Fred, folding his arms, leaning back against the wall, and gazing upon his kind-faced big brother, who sat playing on the arm of his chair with his toil, distorted fingers.

"Nothin' *much,* hey?" sighed Bill.

"Except, of course, that I hate to think of leaving all this to you. I took myself out, and you here, can't move."

"Don't ever worry yourself about that. I've told you before I want to go nowhere. I am contented right here."

"You say you are, because you don't want to make me feel bad."

"What d'ye suppose I'm hankering after? It should be so, Fred, I was always naturally a farmer. I began by milkin' cows at five or six. You was always the smart head, you know, the leader of all the kids. You liked better to read an' to figure. It should be so, Fred."

"If you had had a chance," Fred started to say, but Bill interrupted him by a wave of his gnarled hand.

"I'm hankering after nothing," he insisted.

"You ought to get married, Bill."

"Married?" said Bill, laughing, then sobering up, went on. "So long as ma'm there's alive, and so long

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there's a mortgage to pay on, I'm going to be contented as I am."

"Do you expect to get married when you have that mortgage paid off?"

Bill laughed again and began to rock himself. "I can't say as I got the girl to get married to. Why don't you get married?"

"Listen, Bill," cried Fred, ignoring his question, "as soon as I get on my feet, I'm going to help you get rid of that mortgage."

"Never mind," said Bill. "You see that you make a man of yourself. See, for God's sake that one of us, at least, amounts to something more'n a farm hand."

They were interrupted by the sudden and almost noiseless entrance of Mrs. Kaye, who first admonished them not to talk so loud as the young lady was sleeping in the next room, and then seated herself on the bed next to Fred.

"What's the matter with you, boys? Up so late at night!"

"We're fighting, mother," said Fred, smiling.

Mrs. Kaye shook her head sentimentally. "I'd give a good deal to have you both, kids again, scrappin'."

Two tears appeared in her eyes and she took a handkerchief from the coat she had hastily thrown over her shoulders, and wiped them away.

"You didn't want us to remain scrapping kids, always, did you, mother?" asked Fred with a tremor in his voice.

"If I saw both of you married, with wives and children and homes of your own, I'd rather have that. But the life you fellows are leadin'. One workin' himself old beside me and the other roamin' around in the city."

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"I'm not roaming around, mother. Wait till I become a lawyer."

"I've been waiting a long time, Freddie. Of course, I am happy about that. That's our great hope."

"It takes a long time, mother," said Fred, thinking of his lost job and his chances for entering Columbia.

"The suffering you have to endure struggling as you do. You have two years yet. You're wearing yourself out, studying and working so hard at the same time. See how you look."

"Oh, you're exaggerating it mother. I don't look so bad. A little pale, but everybody looks that way in the city."

They continued the conversation till the clock downstairs slowly cuckooed twelve, then they retired.

CHAPTER IX.

When Anna went to bed, she was very happy. It took her some time to get herself to stop thinking of the events of the day and dreaming about them. Just as those events had excited her into great mental activity, so the air, and her physical exertion had made her very sleepy and she soon fell asleep, sleeping peacefully through the night, till a band of young roosters woke her up into the sweet sunshine of an autumn morning.

After breakfast, Fred read to her as she lay stretched on a tuft of grass near the house. In the afternoon they walked down to a part of the creek where they could go rowing and rented a boat.

There were very few resorters about, it being late in the season, so they had the creek to themselves.

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Fred rowed, while Anna felt good enough to be mischievous and did everything she could, to hinder him. She dipped her hands into the water and sprinkled his neck till he threatened to wash her face. One time, after he had begun to think that she had decided to behave herself, she grabbed a wide board that floated within her reach and stuck it into the water vertically keeping it there till Fred looked about to see what made his rowing so hard. Another time just as they were about to turn along with a curve in the creek, she grabbed an overhanging branch. Fred tugged away without looking back till she was forced to let go.

They came upon a very beautiful landing place and stopped. A golden sandy spot on the banks surrounded by trees and shrubbery and one gigantic pine, provided comfortable, rock or grass tuft seats and security for the boat; while for those who wished to stroll, a most inviting pathway led deep into the woods.

Anna's exuberance of joy found expression as soon as she landed. First she dashed off on the path like a thing of the woods, then she came back and before Fred, who had managed to secure his boat and to find a comfortable seat, began to dance about with great hilarity, as if she had never been sick in her life.

Fred sat reclined against a rock, his hands clasped on his head, and his eyes fixed upon her.

She suddenly stopped dancing, gathered a few colored leaves, threw herself down upon her knees as near to him as she dared, and, staring at him, demanded, "What makes you stare at me so?"

"I'm admiring the happy disposition you've got."

"I'm not always like that," she hastily replied, sitting back, playing with her leaves, fearing that deep

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down in his heart this might be a quality he disliked.

"Everybody has his moods," he told her, understanding the cause of her peculiar defence.

He was not sure whether that was a quality he liked in a woman or not. In his adolescent days, he had had no doubts about it and should have answered himself instantly in the negative. But great changes were creeping over him, and about many things he was confused.

He switched his gaze to a defiant little weed that struggled to hold its own against a heap of dead pine needles, and tried to think. Since he had begun to devour books and magazines and especially since he had met the little city girl whose eyes he could never forget, and had argued with her, he had set his mind upon the hope that he would find for his feminine partner, if not a celebrity, as she used to dream about becoming, at least, a very well educated woman. Down deeper in his being was coupled with it a hope he never dared express audibly, but that nevertheless colored all his dreams of women. It made no difference how intellectual this dream-girl was, she was invariably beautiful, as beautiful as the shadow that haunted that sylvan creek. He would deny before others that a beautiful soul needed a beautiful body, but to himself he often stated frankly that the woman he married would be a beautiful woman, not in these terms, but in terms of images, that guided him in his infatuations.

Anna was a poor shop girl to whom life had denied both beauty and education. He had served her because she needed his services. He was not ashamed of her, because his heart was always in sympathy with those whom poverty had disinherited, with those who toiled, for he prided himself on being poor and on being a toiler. He appreciated fully and contemplated

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with heart-ache the fact that she was not responsible for the bringing up that society had forced upon her. He was glad to see her happy and enjoyed the thought that he had been instrumental in making her happy; yet, as he sat there thinking it over he was taken with an alarming fear that she might misunderstand the cause of his doing what he had done for her; while the thought of his own conduct of the night before, weighed heavily on his conscience.

Anna got tired of his dreaming in silence and began to throw pebbles at him. He merely shielded his face with his hands and continued sitting there silently. She stole up to him and shoving her fingers into his hair, she pulled it.

"Please don't do that," he said, impatiently frowning, and Anna knew that his objection was not to the act itself but rather to what it might portend, and was very much hurt.

They took the little boat again, and while rowing home, Fred tried very hard to get her back into her former good spirits, but everything he said or did was met with but the minimum of response.

They reached the place where they had rented the boat and went ashore.

It was already evening. The western sky above the mountain line was stained blood-red. The east was pale and silvery with but the faintest reflection of crimson from the sky in the west. The energetic wind that had arisen from nowhere was driving with fury, clouds, like great ships, driving them from somewhere to somewhere.

In his efforts to make up for what he had said, Fred became very mirthful and even playful. He took off his coat, put it around her, took her arm and hurried her along, saying all the funny things he could.

By the time they reached the little house, Anna

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began arguing with herself. "I may be mistaken about that. I'm too sensitive."

By the end of the week Anna had apparently forgotten about the little incident and had waxed more and more intimate. Fred found good reasons for departing for New York, and she considered them legitimate.

When he stood on the little platform, waiting for the arrival of the little train bound for the village of Catskill, he was impatient and wished the train to hurry along and take him off. It finally did come, and boarding it, he waved to her as it pulled out. When it turned a curve, he entered the car and threw himself into a seat, feeling very much relieved.

"Do I say a whole lot that I don't mean?" he asked himself as the little train flew along. "Do I profess to believe in a great deal that I am not ready to live up to? I suppose by the time I get to be an old man, I will begin to be honest with myself. I shall then live up to what I now merely talk about. Old age must be the most beautiful period of a man's life. Think of sitting down quietly and making inventories of what has been, instead of constantly guessing about what will be.

"Oh, if I could get to live my life, unafraid!" he cried within himself, thinking of what the farmer folk had been saying about "him an' his gal," and about his resentment of their nonsense.

"I want to befriend them all. Why should I tie myself down to anybody or anybody's ideas? Oh, I want to do what is right and I don't know what is right. She felt very bad because I wouldn't stay another week. Poor girl. I suppose she understands. She probably sees through me just as clearly as I think I see through her every act. Perhaps I shouldn't have come out at all. And then, why shouldn't I have come

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out and why shouldn't I have stayed another week? She would have been happy and it wouldn't have harmed me any.

"I *don't* consider myself too good for anybody, nor better than anybody. Surely there is nothing wrong about *choice* and *taste*. Had she been a very beautiful girl, though, I suppose I would have stayed. If she had had good clothes, soft silky stuff, had she spoken insipidly of college days, and schoolroom nonsense, I should gladly have stayed the whole month. Perhaps I should have taken pains to instruct her in my particular ways of thinking, or perhaps I should have managed to overlook her ignorance, or perhaps I should have been so enraptured that I should have been entirely unconscious of her ignorance.

"That's just the way we look at things. Poor Anna! She is struggling as hard as anybody to do what she thinks is right, struggling harder than most other and more fortunate creatures to get some enjoyment out of this bitter hour. Why should she get less of it than anybody else—her soul craves with just as much fervor, and suffers defeat and disappointment every bit as painfully.

"Oh, for the day when there will be no more shops, to detain any boy or girl from the school room, to blacken dainty finger-nails, to plant ugly hollows, or to turn pink white cheeks to yellow."

He reached New York and made his way through the noisy throngs between grinding cars and wagons, to his little flat.

CHAPTER X.

That night Fred went to see the Hennys. He was surprised upon nearing their home to find himself anxiously desiring to get there. The tenement hall-

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ways were as dirty as ever, and the sickly lights at their extremities were no less sickly.

He rapped on the door and Matilda answered him faintly. She was washing her dishes on the wash tubs near the window. The light had been turned very low to reduce the gas bill, and in that poor light she looked ghostlike, very much worn and lifeless.

Expressing the gladness she felt in seeing him, she turned up the light, and, bringing the rocker to the window, asked him to be seated.

"Carl sleeping?" he asked.

"Yes, he doesn't feel very good. He hasn't been feeling good all week."

His visit seemed to have revived her and while plying him with questions about Anna, she rapidly finished her dishwashing.

"Will you have something warm to drink?" she asked, "it is a little chilly. Yes, do. I want some tea."

The tea was soon made and pouring out two cupfuls they sat down opposite each other at the table to drink and talk. There was something Matilda wanted to tell him about, but she was hesitating for want of a proper beginning. She sipped a little of her tea, then stopped as if the agitation within her was too great for so calm a performance as tea drinking. She kept gazing furtively at Fred till she thought he sensed her agitation, then her cheeks turned red and she looked away and attempted to take another sip of tea.

"Well, how have things been?" he asked her.

"Oh, it's terrible," she began excitedly as if this had been the very question she had been waiting for. "It's so hard to get along."

She stopped drinking and pressed her fingers against her temples.

"It is so hard to get along," she repeated. "First

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it's one thing and then it's another. It's like trying to swim when you can't and have been thrown over board. Your eyes hurt, your nose feels as if it's bleeding, your throat is choking with the nasty salt water, and you feel as if it's all over with you. That's the way I feel now."

She folded her arms and sat back, then went on. "I don't mind the work, nor is it because I haven't got the things I want. I love Carl and I could love my little home, if only it weren't so hard to get along. This thing is absolutely needed and that thing is absolutely needed, and more troubles coming, and there's no way out. We haven't paid you a cent."

"I told you not to worry about that."

"Carl's been reduced two dollars a week and it's taken the flesh right off him."

"How's that?"

"I don't know. Mr. Donald came in to see him the other day and told him that he would have to work for eight dollars after that. He gave him no reason and Carl didn't ask for any. Carl says he knows why, but there is nothing for him to do. You see some one must have told Donald that he is sick."

"The dirty beast!" cried Fred, leaving his seat and pacing the floor up and down the little kitchen, then, retaking his seat he turned to Matilda and demanded, "Why didn't you go to Androon and fight it out with him?"

"What's the use, don't I know what he'll say?"

"What does Carl say to you about it?"

"Oh, you don't know how wretched it has made him feel. It'll kill him. He claims that he's been doing more work than usual, to keep them from feeling that he is doing less. Besides being an injustice it has made him terribly hopeless about his health. He thinks anybody can now see that he's dying."

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Fred looked at her. His heart was aching with compassion. He gazed upon the poor work worn naked arms and the poor baby eyes strained with crying. He had no consolation to offer her—there was none.

"No sooner do you plug up one hole, than another leak breaks somewhere else," said Matilda without changing her position and without taking her gaze off from a knot in one of the floor boards. "Soon after Anna left, he began to suffer with his teeth. He had to go to the dentist every night this week, came home to-night with a bill for eight dollars, and tells me he will have to go there again in a week or two. He has been suffering headaches ever since I know him, and I know that it is due to his eyes. Next week he simply will have to go to see an oculist."

"You never did anything for your eyes did you?"

"No, I'll be very glad if he can attend to his. My teeth need more attention than my eyes, but what's the use of talking, I wish that was all I had to worry about."

She began to sigh and act very queerly and Fred watching her, became worried.

"What do you mean?"

"Oh, what's the use," she muttered, and the tears came to her eyes.

"You might as well tell me the rest of it."

"Oh, what's the use," she repeated. "It's wrong to bother you with all these things."

"It's much more wrong to let you suffer like this," he muttered.

"It isn't that I want you to help me again, will you believe me, Fred? I know you would do everything you could. I just have to have somebody to talk to about it or I don't know what will happen to me. I have so much to bear. I can't bear it alone,

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and don't dare talk to Carl about it. I have to be hopeful with him. It's bad enough to have to suffer as I have to suffer; but what makes it maddening is that I have to make believe I'm happy. I have to smile or he just sinks before me."

"But you haven't told me yet, what the terrible trouble is. Perhaps I *can* help you a little."

"O, I don't want any more help from you. We have been too much of a nuisance to you already. And you know, it's all my own doings. I suppose you know now what the trouble is?"

Fred looked at her sharply. He did not know, She attempted to explain, and hesitated again, but the last hesitation was a full explanation.

"Have you tried to do anything?" he asked, trying to subdue his emotions.

"I went to see Carl's doctor, to-day."

"What did he have to say?"

"If all my life I have done wrong, I suffered punishment enough in the few moments that I was in that man's office. Such a calling down as I got. We are all beasts, he said, and we had no business to marry. It is against the law and he will do nothing for me. We got into trouble though we should have known better, we will have to get out of it as best we can. I had to fairly get on my knees before him to get him to promise that he would say nothing to Carl about it. He promised at first to give Carl a calling down when he saw him. It would have killed Carl."

"If you had come to him with a few hundred dollar bills," said Carl, his lips white with anger, "he would have performed one of those successful 'appendicitis' operations that society women undergo so often. The law would not have bothered him."

"He told me that it was already a living child," sobbed Matilda. "I hoped all along that it would die—

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I kept hoping and praying that it would die within me, but yesterday I changed my mind. The woman next door has been worrying me about how to get rid of it, but it seemed to me, yesterday, as I listened to her, that I saw a sweet baby with Carl's face. I saw it growing older till it grew to be a man, like Carl; while she kept telling me how to kill it. I felt as if I had been in a conspiracy to murder. I ran away from her. It is too late, Fred. It is now a living child and any one that will try to kill it will have to kill me first."

Fred gazed at her and shook nervously. From that moment on she was a sacred thing to him. Toiling and suffering as she had been, toil-worn and yellow and weak as she was, the universal creative force was building a being within her—she was the universal creative force.

With the assurance that something would be done for her, he left telling her to go to bed and not to poison the little being with worry.

CHAPTER XI.

Professor Guano, one of the professors of Columbia Law School, who had also lectured for the Evening Law School, and who was very fond of Fred Kaye, with whom he had had many an animated argument, was instrumental in securing Fred's admission to the junior class at Columbia.

Fred registered and attended the course for two weeks when he received a notice that he must pay at once, the first term's tuition of seventy-five dollars or he would be dropped from the roll. His bank account had dwindled down to the last one hundred dollars. His books and furniture, together with that one hun-

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dred dollars constituted all that he possessed. He was afraid to pay the bursar out of that hundred dollars because he had promised to help Matilda. He debated with himself a long time over this, sometimes feeling that he ought to pay the bursar with it and at others very much alarmed about what would happen to the little family if he should not be able to help them.

He lay awake a whole night arguing with himself whether he should or should not continue his study of law, but the picture of his mother sitting beside him on the bed and William's anxious face when he expressed the hope that "one at least would turn out to be somethin' more'n a farm hand," drove him from the conclusion he should otherwise have arrived at.

He had escaped from his home in the Catskills because of the nothingness of his life there. The city had been so promising—it was to have satisfied every longing that swayed him—there he was to have accomplished the dream of his life—to be great—to amount to something! But he was already disillusioned and his old longings came back to torment him and his dwindling faith in life's purpose as he had been seeing it helped in the torture.

He started down the street immediately after dressing next morning and walked very rapidly, as if he intended to walk all the way to Columbia Heights. When he came to Twelfth Street he began to desire a cup of Androon's coffee and turned down for the cafe. He despised Androon but his state of mind made him a prey to his desire.

He took his seat in the shadow of the projection in the wall. The waiter, spick and span, as if he had never left the place, but like the table had merely been recovered with clean linen, was there to fawn upon him. Fred wanted no more than a cup of coffee, but the waiter respectfully called his attention to a notice

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on the bill of fare to the effect that they served for no less than fifteen cents. Fred was slightly ashamed at first, and foolishly ordered a full breakfast.

On his way back the waiter had with him a saucer containing four prunes in a puddle of brown sauce with all manner of spots in it and a medium sized hair.

Fred tasted a prune then shoved the rest back. When the poached eggs, he had ordered, arrived one of them was broken and spread all over the soggy toast. The coffee alone was very good. To make sure that the stuff would not be given to some one else, he poured the prunes over the eggs and toast, then shoving a nickle under his plate, left the cafe, saying to himself as he went, "Thirty-five cents for food I couldn't eat, and still I have to pay this man for serving Androon. If you don't like the nickle, don't take it."

He made for the nearest elevated railroad station. People swarmed about platforms and stairways like bees about their honey. Yellow faces, green faces, red rouged faces, little men and women, big men and women, old men and women, some consumed by toil, others brighter, stouter and apparently happier, all squeezed and shoved, and spread like the prunes, the soggy toast, and the yellow broken egg. One on top of the other, breathing into each other's blank expressionless faces, they were making for their different destinations like mad men and fools for the hundred thousandth time with the same insipid but irresistible purpose.

At Columbia he found the budding young lawyers assembled in the class rooms, and as he took his seat, he muttered, "Acquiring a great deal of conceit and a little knowledge." He was somewhat late, and his fellows were already holding forth on the point at is-

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sue. It was all about the title of a house which a certain individual wanted to get rid of. This individual was supposed to have allowed no more than the minimum of exposure and to have gotten the maximum amount of money from the fish that had bitten at his bait.

Fred sat and watched them all, wondering how they could possibly give so much time and attach so much importance to anything so ridiculous and uninteresting, while Matilda wanted help, and Anna wanted help, and Carl was dying, and he himself was becoming a pessimist. And all the while, he was getting nothing from the lecture. In this manner he went from class to class, from professor to professor, getting nearer and nearer the conclusion that he *was* wasting his time, that he was never meant to be a lawyer.

At four o'clock in the afternoon, he was through with the last class of the day and, with a sigh of relief, left the Law School. On the campus a number of young lawyers, doctors, and educators were pursuing an alleged criminal freshman, who they claimed, had had the impudence to come upon the campus with cuffed trousers. The freshman had just issued from the library, when they spied him, and like a hungry pack of wolves, fangs showing and eyes glowing, they dashed after him. A tall lanky fellow, who was a member of one of Fred's classes was in the lead and the pack followed. The face of the young freshman was pale as death and no victim of beasts of prey could have shown more terror than was written all over him as he ran for his life. His chances for escape were very good until, suddenly, as he neared the east fountain, he slipped on one of the stone stairs and fell head first, upon the sidewalk. A horrible shout escaped

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the pack and like triumphant wolves, they were soon all upon him.

The lanky, embryo lawyer, was the law giver. Obeying his orders the pack formed a circle and four of them grabbed each a hand or a foot, and carried him to the western of the two fountains. There they laid him down on the walk, and producing a pocket knife one of the pack proceeded to amputate the cuffs, while the victim yelled and cried in protest. When they lifted him and threw him clothes and all into the fountain, Fred was beside himself with rage. He stood there shaking like a leaf, and calling himself coward for fearing to rush in upon them to the freshman's rescue.

He was making up his mind to do so, when he felt a hand upon his shoulder and turning about looked into the face of Professor Guano.

"Come with me," said the professor, understanding just what was going on in the farmer student's mind, "They are young animals, if you interfere they will do to you what they are doing to him."

There was something in the professor's round shoulders, his dark glistening eyes with the far away look in them, his soft determined voice, and his brown weather-beaten skin that captivated Fred, and, protesting feebly against non-interference, he followed him into his office, on the third floor of the Law School Building.

They argued for a long time about the right or wrong of tolerating such an abuse of power and grew silent for a while.

Suddenly Fred rose from his seat and with vehement determination cried, "I'm going to drop the whole business, I don't want to be one of that gang."

"Oh, no," said Professor Guano, "that's very fool-

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ish. I don't see what your staying or leaving has to do with that."

"It has this much to do with it. I'm sick of these hypocrites, and since I can't be a hypocrite, I will probably make a poor lawyer and I had better leave now before I waste any more time."

"I'm surprised at you, Mr. Kaye," said Professor Guano, "I gave you credit for being much more sensible than that. The idea of your throwing up your profession because a few silly boys exhibited their animal spirits."

"It isn't my profession and I don't want it to be. I have often wondered how a man like you, interested in the big things of life can narrow yourself down to such sickening things as dirty houses and lots."

Professor Guano sat back in his seat and laughed very heartily, as heartily as *he* could laugh, then relapsing into his weighty serious mood, he replied. "It is a matter of bread and butter, my boy, and you have to eat, too, you know. And then I really enjoy it."

"Well, I don't enjoy it and I'm going to give it up."

"Oh, no, you mustn't give it up now."

"I was going to give it up any way, in fact, I have practically given it up already."

"After I went to all that trouble getting them to admit you?"

"I can't help it, Professor Guano. I can't help it."

"But you can help it. After all the things I said about you?"

"Professor Guano, you don't understand. I would have left anyway. I meant to tell you so to-morrow. I had decided this long before I saw the hoodlums."

"Well, now why?"

"I'd rather not tell you."

"Then, I am sorry to say, I don't believe you."

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"Well, if that's the way you feel about it, I'm going to make it clear. I haven't got the money for tuition."

"Why didn't you think of that before?"

"Because I did have it then. Since that time, I have lost the job which I hoped to be able to keep in part and with which I had hoped to earn my way through the course. I was also called upon to use the greater part of the money which I had saved up."

"If I loan you a hundred dollars, will that carry you through the first term?"

"But I don't want to get into debt. I don't know how I'll manage throughout the rest of the course, and why should I take your money?"

"You are just trying to find an excuse."

"Well, then if you want to waste your money on me, go ahead."

Professor Guano turned to his desk, located his little book and wrote a check for a hundred dollars.

Professor Guano had an appointment and they left the building, the professor with his arm affectionately on Fred's shoulder.

The campus was deserted.

"See," said the Professor with a smile, "everything's all right now."

"Because we can't see everything?" replied Fred unsubdued. "The fellow's probably gnashing his teeth."

"Oh, you are too serious, Mr. Kaye," said the Professor, extending his right hand. "Things are not half as bad as they seem to you. I'm sorry I'm in a hurry. I want to say one more thing to you, before I go. Do take care of your health."

With this they parted.

"No," cried Fred to himself, as he boarded a trolley. "It is not true. Things *are* bad. They are

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worse than we allow ourselves to think they are. Everything was all right because he didn't see the victim any more. If it were not for our selfishness, if we didn't eternally drown our better natures in this balmy delusion that things *are not so bad,* we might be doing something to make them better.

"Is a man sick because his eyes are normal and he sees what he comes in contact with? Is he well only when he fools himself? When backs that are bent and broken by toil appear straight to him? When he overlooks all the maddening misery and sees only the faint smile that occasionally flits across pale faces? Surely I'm not crazy! What has my health got to do with Carl's consumption? With Matilda's mother love for babies wilting into hatred—into murder—for her child. What has my health got to do with Denelli's ruined life and Androon's robbing him? With Anna's wasting desire for a home that she ought to have? They are crazy, every one of them, or they are so stupidly selfish they will not see, or else they are simply blind.

He alighted from the trolley car in which he had been riding, and went into a grocery store a short distance from where he lived to buy himself a few articles of food for his dinner.

In his little kitchen, he dropped the packages he was carrying and finding the silence of his rooms too oppressive, decided to take his dinner at the restaurant.

He went into the front room to change his clothes, but was interrupted by someone knocking on his door. Replacing the coat that he had taken off, he went to open the door and found that it was Matilda.

She was very pale and nervous and looked as though she was going to collapse.

"What brought you here?" he inquired escorting

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her into the front room where she dropped into the morris chair.

"Fred, I'm nearly crazy with worry," she blurted out. "Whether he is sick or whether he has just turned into a demon, I don't know; but he nearly killed me to-day."

She burst into tears.

"He woke up this morning coughing violently and began to nag at me. He actually grabbed me by the hand and refused to let me go to work and insisted that I must go to the doctor at once and—and have it killed. I hoped that by the time he'd come home to-night he'd be over his fit, but he was worse. He just won't bring another little consumptive into the world, he cries from morning till night. He'd rather die than be guilty of that and all that stuff. He almost fired me out of the house, because I didn't go this morning as he had told me to, and insisted that I go to-night. I just had to come here. Where else could I go, Fred? You see it means doctor bills. The doctor alone wants twenty-five dollars. We will need clothes for it, and I'll have to stop working for two weeks. I don't blame him for feeling bad, but why does he pitch on to me, as if I alone were to blame?"

"Listen, Matilda," began Fred, "I'll meet all the expenses of that child, and I'll go home with you and give Carl the biggest talking to he has ever got."

The sudden solution of the dreadful problem, and his incomparable kindness overwhelmed her and she rose, her eyes wet with tears, and grabbing his hand kissed it passionately. She was staggering, her feet seemed to be giving way under her. Fred took hold of her and, resigning herself to his care, her head dropped upon his shoulder.

At first Fred was very much alarmed, then he heard her sob, and lowering his head, till his cheek

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touched her cheek, he sent down to the shaping little god in her womb the only touch of goodness that had yet gone into its complex and wonderfully beautiful makeup.

They remained that way for a few moments, then she gained control of herself and they started for her home.

CHAPTER XII.

"I've been a governor," said Fred to himself early next morning just after he had awakened, "I have commuted the little thing's death sentence——" He hesitated a moment, then went on, "Yes, I guess it is to life imprisonment." He smiled at his clever way of wording his thoughts, turned from lying on his back to his right side, and added, "Or perhaps I'm no governor at all. Perhaps I am just a puny little lawyer who has succeeded in postponing the execution of the sentence pending a futile appeal to another court. It was foolish to give her the whole hundred dollars. That's the way I lose my head. If I hadn't had that check with me, I wouldn't have indorsed it."

But Fred thought of Carl's fiery arguments of the night before, and finally concluded it was a good thing that he did have the check with him, and that he was very glad it was all settled.

He dressed, prepared some breakfast for himself, and without washing the dishes went into his study to do some work. He had no classes at Columbia that day, but had a great deal of studying to do. He found that he had missed much by the irregular manner in which he had attended to his work, and was tempted once more to throw up the whole thing. It wasn't the hard work, nor the amount of it, that bothered him. Law had simply become distasteful to him.

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In the course of his thinking, it occurred to him that he had not yet made an attempt to study, that his dishes needed washing, and that his flat was badly in need of cleaning.

"What is really the matter with me?" he asked himself, "I never was this way before. I have no ambition for anything. I think I ought to give up this flat. It's beginning to weigh upon me."

He decided that if he sold his furniture and books and moved into a furnished room, it would be a more economical way of living. Besides he was beginning to feel that his belongings were but so much dead weight hanging about his neck, as it were, and felt too, that the sale of them would enlarge his bank account.

It was the strongest decision he had come to in a long time. He closed his book, rearranged matters on his desk, threw the breakfast dishes into a heap, and started right out to sell everything he had.

He came to a very large second hand store. From one end to the other, the floor space, the walls and the ceiling, were covered with a bewildering array of chairs, tables, dressers, bureaus, and rolls of oilcloth. Every object seemed to have a dirty looking glass in some part of it, and, whichever way he went, he saw some shadowy reflection of himself. He wandered down one of the narrow, precarious aisles between two long rows of dressers and bureaus and under overhanging clusters of cheap chairs, and came upon the only movable thing in the place—a man with a face on him, strangely resembling his furniture. He wore spectacles that looked like gilt framed looking glasses.

It was the very place where Fred had bought the furniture he was now trying to get rid of, but the near sighted man did not recognize him. Too many others

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had since then come to burden themselves there with luggage.

The second-hand furniture dealer seemed to have had a premonition that the visitor had come to rid himself of something, and so displayed on his countenance a frowning indifference.

Fred looked at him a moment inclined to walk out again without disturbing what seemed to him to be the shade of an old dresser or bureau but it suddenly began to speak.

"Well?"

"I want to sell you some stuff that I bought here two years ago."

He wished to know where Fred lived and said that as soon as his assistant came back from somewhere, he would go to see it.

Fred returned to his study and made another attempt to work, but now his mind was too much occupied with what the little man might offer for his belongings and with where he would go to look for a room, and studying was more impossible than it had been.

Instead of coming in a few minutes as he said he would the little man didn't make his appearance until sometime in the afternoon, and kept Fred all that time in his room waiting for him. He came and shoved his way in after the faintest kind of a rap and without waiting for an invitation to come in, then began rummaging about everything as if it already belonged to him. He opened drawers, looked into closets, turned chairs upside down, and tore up the carpet to see its other side.

After a period of about half an hour during which time Fred was on several occasions tempted to throw him out, he ended his examination, rushed to the door as if anxious to be ready to depart on the instant,

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grabbed the door knob and delivered himself of the offer of "twenty dollars for the whole business."

"Twenty dollars!" cried Fred, "I paid you over a hundred."

"You've used it long enough," he replied looking contemptuously at Fred as if Fred were pitiably small and contemptible.

"That's ridiculous," cried Fred and the little fellow disappeared.

Of all the other dealers who came to examine his belongings only one offered more than the first one had offered. He said he would give twenty-five dollars, and Fred, afraid that the fellow's lack of enthusiasm might lead him to back down on his offer, closed the bargain.

He went through a similar process in getting rid of his books for twelve dollars. His books, he figured had cost him seventy-five dollars and when he saw them go he was glad that he hadn't brought all his books with him from the farm. With his thirty-seven dollars, a suit case full of clothes and a trunk filled with clothes and law books which he sent by express, he left his flat and took up his abode on the third floor of a furnished room house on Columbia Heights.

With the exception of the trunk, he lugged the things he had kept for himself, making two trips, and getting himself all tuckered out.

"Let those own junk who delight in it," he said bringing his last load and seating himself on his cot in the furnished room. "The less you have, the less you have to worry about, and the less you have to lug when you move."

A young fellow of his own age and size appeared in the doorway.

"What are you doing here?" he asked grinning his recognition.

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"Thought I'd move up a little closer to the college," Fred answered.

Fred knew this student well, having sat next to him but the day before in one of the class rooms; but he didn't know his name, and having nothing else to say, asked for that information. The student then introduced himself as James W. Purton, and walking into the room seated himself in the only chair there.

"I live right up above you," he began, "if you hear all kinds of thumping around there, don't pay any attention to it."

"Are you in the habit of thumping around, or do you walk in your sleep?"

"Me? Don't you believe it. I sleep when I sleep. The trouble is that I don't sleep much. I don't do any thumping around by myself either. But I have fair company when I can."

"Where do you get your fair company?"

"I belong to a 'frat'!"

He added the name of his "frat" but to Fred it sounded like a crazy combination of consonants with one or two vowels.

"What do you call that?"

Mr. Purton became slightly abashed. He did not know the correct pronunciation of the Greek letters by which his fraternity called itself and had hoped to cover his mispronunciation by the rapidity with which he had said it.

"Oh, I don't know what it really is," he stammered, "It's something like A-l-a b-e-t-a k-ɔ-p-a or something."

"What a name to take."

"Nice girls there though."

"Why do you fellows take such names for your fraternities?"

"What's in a name? There are nice girls there."

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"Just to show that you have something to do with Greek, hey?"

"Greek! Who cares about Greek? There are nice girls there."

"Oh, the dickens with your girls. You've told me that three times."

Mr. Purton roared with laughter. "I couldn't tell you enough about them."

"What do you get out of your fraternity?"

"Nice girls there."

"Yes, but do you and your nice girls get anything out of it?"

"We get each other of course," said Purton roaring louder than ever.

"And that isn't much."

"It's as much as any of us care to get, I assure you, I'm not going to the 'frat' to learn law. I'll have to forget nine-tenths of what I cram before quiz comes along. You're too darn serious. The fellows all say that. Why don't you join the 'frat'? You'll enjoy it."

"No, I guess not."

"Oh, you're an old man. You're foolish. If you don't enjoy your college life you never will enjoy anything. Take that from me."

They continued the argument for some time then Mr. Purton left, saying as he went, "I'm going to propose you to the 'frat'."

"Wait a minute," Fred called after him.

Mr. Purton returned.

"Say, do you know of a good job for a fellow like me? I mean after school hours."

"I do not," said Mr. Purton and by the very refined expression on Mr. Purton's face, Fred knew that he was not going to be proposed for membership in his fellow student's fraternity.

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CHAPTER XIII.

Unwanted, red for a day or two and growing more yellow each day thereafter, at break of dawn on a November morning, after tormenting his mother with excruciating pain for the whole preceding day and night, Matilda's baby boy, his mouth open, reluctantly made his way upon earth.

In spite of all the agony she had suffered, in spite of its redness and yellowness and its incessant crying, Matilda, her eyes half open, her limbs weak and listless, loved it with a passion intense and durable as life while Carl, pitying her, and given to viewing things with the darkness of his approaching night, almost hated it—its noise drove him frantic.

The moment after the doctor had helped the wailing youngster to make his arrival, he was wrapped in flannel upon flannel. His limbs were imprisoned, and his skin was denied the slightest touch of air. Even over his red, bald, baby head the blanket extended in the form of a hood. Only the smallest fraction of the area of his nose-point was given a chance at air contact—air that came from the polluted slums and that was further polluted in the birthroom where each of the two windows had been securely closed. He revolted against this. He kicked and yelled and screamed till his undeveloped mechanism gave up and he fell asleep.

Anna hurried back from the Catskills and took up the duties of nurse, imposed upon her by Matilda's exceptionally weak condition. Anna had grown stout and the good humor that she had brought with her had a decided effect upon Carl. She carried the little bundle up to him upon his return from the shop on baby Carl's third evening. It was not screaming and turned a blank stare upon him. There was something

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in that baby face that he had not seen there before—something unheard of and unthought of in all Carl's life—something absolutely new to his experience. He bent down and kissed it, and while Anna walked about the room with it, he stole into where Matilda lay asleep, and, at sight of her pale face, marked by the great agony she had endured, he was filled with compassion and regretted his own ill humor. He bent down and kissed her too, then returned to the kitchen.

Baby Carl Junior's silence was not long-lived. Anna had put him down for a moment so she could give his father something to eat. As soon as he became aware of the change he began to cry. And he cried and cried and screamed, but no one understood him. Oh, the tirade he made! All the sorrow he had been forced to endure before he had made his way into the world, had left its bitter impression upon his little soul. He wailed long and loud, now that he could express himself, wailed against the suffering she had endured and wailed against malnutrition, and against the slavery into which his limbs were bound and which denied him even the foul air that the unventilated rooms afforded.

The conditions against which he almost tore his little lungs in protest, clutched at the heart of the mother too. The milk nature meant to give well was poisoned by poverty and little Carl had to be trained to take a concoction of cow's milk and other ingredients as a substitute. At first he absolutely refused to take it. He cried and continued crying till his vitals dug at him in their demands and brought upon him his first great defeat. After refusing stubbornly to touch the bottle for half a day, he yielded, began slowly to swallow the stuff, his eyes suffused with tears, and fell asleep. The next day his stubbornness gave way sooner and proportionately sooner the following day

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and so on until it became a habit, and he accepted without further protest what the world owed him in a fraudulent mixture, contained in a cold hard bottle with a dead black rubber nipple. He instinctively cried for his mother's breast, but in time he swallowed all these objections and learned to take what he could get, cold or lifeless, bitter or sour, for the great life force within him demanded and in some way or other had to be appeased.

Carl senior partook but slightly of the food Anna had prepared for him, though his day at the shop had been a particularly hard one, offering indisposition as an excuse. Immediately after his attempt to eat, he threw himself upon the couch in the front room with a sigh that brought the tears to Matilda's eyes.

Tired of searching for the cause of baby's incessant crying, after assuring his mother that that was the correct thing to do, Anna put him into his little bed with the hope that he would cry himself to sleep, and returned to the kitchen to eat her supper by herself.

She sat at the table motionless until the little fellow had fallen asleep before she had any desire to attempt to eat. She was very tired. The silence intensified by the abnormal breathing of the sleepers in the front room became unbearable to her, and she felt herself lost, with no connections whatever in a sombre gloomy world. Her good humor deserted her and she sat with her elbows on the sticky oilcloth, her face in her hands, and her eyes shut.

"I wonder why Fred keeps away?" she asked herself and a host of thoughts concerning him awoke in her mind.

She had not been thinking very long, before some one rapping on the door, startled her. She went to the door and opening it, saw Fred before her with a very weighty expression on his face.

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"Talk of the ——" she said gleefully.

"Devil," he said and falling into the rocker with a sign went on, "and whom could you have been talking to about the devil?"

"Myself," she admitted.

"I am a devil to-night, all right. I'd like to get hold of those who are responsible for this world of ours, and choke the life out of them."

"You don't think I have anything to do with the running of this world, do you?"

"Oh, no, you poor thing! You are one of the victims, as I am."

"Good. Then I shall give you something to eat. I just couldn't eat by myself, I was so lonesome. But, here, you must wash the dishes with me afterwards."

"I'll wipe them."

"You're a good cook," said Fred beginning to eat ravenously.

"Oh, I can cook all right, when there's what to cook."

"There's the rub, we have to work our finger-nails off, to get that *what.*"

But Anna didn't agree with him. "It is not as bad as all that. Young people get along beautifully on very modest salaries."

"I think young people are crazy to get married on small salaries," Fred insisted and Anna argued with him till it was time to wash the dishes, then finding herself making no headway with her argument went off in another direction.

"Do you know," she began, "I'll have to get after Donald pretty soon."

"I've been talking to my landlady about you. She complained to me about the carelessness of some of her girls and I asked her whether she needed a girl.

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Would you take such a job? It isn't a respectable job, but I think it's better than shop work."

"Respectable! I am not looking for a respectable job, I'm not respectable myself."

"Good for you, Anna, neither am I. Remember what I told you Walt Whitman said about that? He loved cows because they are not respectable."

"I'm not a cow, but Mr. Whitman knows what he is talking about."

"Sounds very funny to hear you talk about Mr. Whitman. Poor Walt would have been horrified, I think, to have been called Mister."

"Well never mind Mr. Whitman or Walt. What about my job?"

"She doesn't need anybody just now, but she might need some one later on. She wants you to call on her. She wants to look at you. I think she needs you but she wants to see you before she employs you."

"You're just the dearest fellow that ever lived," cried Anna almost dancing for joy, "I could hug you, but I'm afraid to."

Fred smiled by way of answer.

Anna got up and started washing the dishes and he by her side wiped them for her and they had a great deal of fun doing so. When through Fred wanted to wash his hands and Anna told him that he'd have to wait till she had washed her hands first. Fred refused to wait and there was a considerable amount of shoving till Fred being the stronger was victorious.

A glass full of water standing on the table provided the only means for retaliating. Dipping her fingers into the water, she shook them over Fred's neck and a pseudo struggle followed which, after some running about the room resulted in Fred's falling back into the rocker with Anna on his lap.

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He had allowed himself to play with her because he had been very miserable and needed relief; and he was very much relieved by that playfulness and enjoyed the sensations of having Anna on his lap. There was in it, all other elements notwithstanding, the touch of soul to soul, struggling human souls, which is so satisfying in a night-like existence like Fred's and Anna's. It is that touch which alone can dispel the weight and woe of voidness. It is that which Hercules got from his mother earth, it is that which we get from our mother's arms when the terrors of our childhood world awake and pursue us.

But before very long, he was possessed by a feeling of guilt. The guilty feeling grew heavier as they sat there, and finally, pleading the necessity for a few hours study that night, he took his leave, and went upon the street breathing deep breaths, like one who, for a long time, has been deprived of air.

CHAPTER XIV.

Fred had at no time in his life been able to have everything he desired, but never before had he been forced to endure distressful hunger. His imagination, roused by pity, had often taken moments in his life when he had been hungry, out in the fields or in the shop, working and waiting patiently for meal time, and had stretched them till he thought he knew what it meant to crave food that there is no way of getting. A time had now come when it was needless to imagine such a condition, when he was obliged to seek in vain to drive thoughts of hunger from his mind. Several months had gone by since he had had a good meal. The winter was hard and enervating. His little bank account had disappeared, and the little work he found

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here and there did not give him enough to pay for even one meal a day. His constant search for work took most of his time away and his standing in the class rooms kept constantly going down. Only the daily counsels of Professor Guano's inexhaustible faith in him, kept him from disappearing.

Anna was out of work for a long time and conditions at the Henny's became so hopelessly bad, that Fred ceased going there. He had absolutely nothing to help them with and couldn't bear the gloom that hung about that little flat. Later Fred induced his landlady to employ Anna and that helped matters a bit. Matilda, soon after she left her bed, took to sewing buttons on shirts that Carl brought home with him. She earned very little, but that little was helpful.

February came along and brought Fred another notice from the bursar. Again seventy-five dollars were needed and he went to Professor Guano certain that the professor would now see the hopelessness of his attempt to go through the course. But the Professor had a new scheme. He told of a fund which the college kept out of which they loaned money to students in need, and he insisted that Fred apply for a loan.

"Ask for enough," he said, "so that you can study without worrying and bring your standing up a bit. I will recommend that the loan should be made."

The loan was refused on the grounds that he had not yet been a student of the college for one year. Fred sat down and wrote the most bitter letter he could think of without telling Professor Guano anything about it. Now he began to feel that it would be wrong to drop the course after it had cost him so much energy.

In reply to his letter he received word from the Comptroller's office requesting him to call. Fred went

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there at once and after waiting a long time was ushered into the Comptroller's private room.

"Mr. Kaye," the Comptroller began, staring at him seriously, "do you think it was right for you to have written me such a letter?"

"Is it wrong to say what you honestly think?" Fred replied curtly, betraying his nervousness.

"I'll put it another way. Do you think you were justified in feeling toward us as you did?"

Fred wanted the money that moment more than at any other time and that moment he was willing to submit, to his later regret.

"It was merely an expression of my own hopelessness," he replied, "it was no indication at all of how I felt towards any one else."

"I'm glad to hear that," said Dr. Farrel victoriously, moving his chair nearer to his desk and reaching for the check book. "We can't let you have the whole two hundred, but Dean Cole is willing to let you have a hundred and fifty."

Dr. Farrel handed him the check and rose to escort him to the door, saying as he went, "You take my advice, my boy, get rid of some of your notions. The world owes you nothing. You will get all that you deserve— all that you work for. If you are really working hard, it will come to you in time."

Oh, how Fred's soul revolted. How often he had given and given freely and willingly. How he wished he could throw the little piece of paper into his face and tell him that it was not his own that he had given. He was humiliated. He was ushered out, and when he reached the hallway, he stopped to reconsider what he was doing.

"Why should I feel bad?" he asked himself. "If that man hadn't had an unfair advantage over me, I shouldn't have been a hypocrite. It isn't his money

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any way. He hasn't done a bit of work for it—I have worked all my life, ever since I have been able to."

He went into the bursar's offce and after a long wait there had his check cashed, then went out upon the campus, where the world seemed threatened with a snow storm.

"Besides having nothing out of the whole struggle, I'll get through, if I do get through, loaded down with debt," he muttered to himself and buttoning his coat against the sharp biting wind, went on slowly hoping to arrive at the decision to go back and throw the money with his compliments upon the Comptroller's desk; but the harder he tried to reach that decision, the nearer the threatening snow storm seemed to come, the further he got from it, and finally, experiencing a second revolution of his feelings, decided to go straight to Androon's cafe and give himself as good a meal as could be bought there.

At Androon's he made up as best he could for the weeks of starvation and lamented that he couldn't eat more. He just didn't care any more what happened or what anybody thought. After that he was going to get all he could out of life like everybody else.

On his way home, however, he became sorry that he had eaten so much. He felt uncomfortably heavy and for some reason or other nearly as miserable as he had been before. That kind of life, that way of looking at things went against his grain. The thought of food nauseated him and he began to fear that that was the way of things, that all we hunger for turns bitter when we finally *get it*. But he corrected himself, "Things turn bitter only when we have too much, and starvation makes gormands of us."

The sky was sadly leaden. All day it had borne dark, gray clouds hanging low and heavy, now, one by one, the flakes began to flutter down. He walked

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a short distance. The wind blew very hard, the flakes were falling fast and thick. His shoes became wet in the cold whiteness and the desire to sleep overtook him. He was cold and jumped on a car. On the car he found a seat in a corner, sat down, and huddled into himself, weary, heavy, wet, cold and miserable. He sat staring at the people about him as if they were dead, speechless shadows going neither here nor there.

When he alighted from his car, the storm had broken loose in all its fury and Columbia Heights was already white with snow. In the blinding gale, he caught black shadowy glimpses of hurrying pedestrians. Some were passing him going whence he came, others went in his direction and brushed against him in their efforts to get ahead of him. Some laughed boisterously and spoke unintelligently as they laughed, and other complained bitterly, the woe of strife in their muffled voices. To him they were all souls lost in the mystery of life, for whom the street lights flickered in the fluttering obscurity, but flickered in vain, pointing everywhere and directing nowhere.

On the third floor near his room, he saw Anna in conference with his landlady over a heap of dirty towels. There was displeasure in the landlady's voice, and worry on Anna's face, but Fred merely nodded to them and went into his room.

It was as warm within as it had been cold without, and the change of temperature though very soothing, intensified his drowsiness. He threw off his outer clothes, took off his collar, and, donning his bathrobe and slippers, stretched himself on his cot and lay there on his back, thinking.

Before his drowsy mind was the extensive, cold, white whirl and in it the flitting human shadows. "Is that all life really is?" he asked himself, and answered,

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"Yes, that's all it is, a blinding snow storm with human souls lost in it."

But that way of thinking was suicidal and with his whole soul, he began to search for arguments against the theory.

The light from his gas jet was very annoying. He threw his arm across his face, covering his eyes.

"I'll have to do something," he concluded, "I mustn't go on like this or I'll go crazy. There is absolutely nothing in my life, worth while."

He thought of the students at the college, happy and contented. He thought of them as he had seen so many of them, out walking with beautiful young girls, going to parties, dancing so happily, and he questioned himself, "What is the matter with me? Why am I so different? Is there really something wrong with me?"

He decided to go on with his course, complete it, practice law, earn money and make himself happier with it. He thought of the promises he had made his mother, thought of William's looking forward to his becoming a lawyer, and the many dollars William had sent him during his first few years away from home.

"I wish I could find a real beautiful girl that I could fall in love with."

He thought of Anna and wondered whether she hoped that he would marry her. "Anna is a good girl, but marrying Anna would be another sacrifice and I am so weary of making sacrifices. I want something out of life. Oh, I want something higher than this eternal struggle over the miserable things of life. I want a little refinement, beauty—I'm so sick of this misery and poverty."

A rap on his door made him jump from his cot, He hung up the heap of clothes that had been lying on the chair near his cot, and opened the door.

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"I have only a few minutes," said Anna coming in and shutting the door behind her, "Oh, it's so nice here. What do you think of the storm?"

"It's been storming like that for me a long time," said Fred retaking his former position on the cot.

"What do you mean?"

"It doesn't really matter what I mean. How are you?"

"Oh, I'm all right. The work is harder than I thought it was going to be, but I'll get used to it, if she gets used to me."

She had got hold of some perfume somewhere and was loaded with it.

"My," said Fred sniffing it, "where did you get that perfume?"

"Like it?"

"Yes, it's very nice."

"That's all for your benefit, see!" she said smiling and bowing.

"Is it? I wish you weren't in such a hurry. I feel, to-night as if I must talk to somebody."

"Feeling blue again are you?"

"No, not exactly. I feel as though I must express myself. I have kept my thoughts to myself a little too long."

"Oh, forget them, Fred. Your thoughts are not good for your health. You think too much, Fred, really."

"You don't understand, Anna," he answered frowning slightly with impatience, "please don't talk any more about it. Do you have to work to-night."

Anna regretted her scolding and his admonition and Fred saw that she regretted it and tried to rid himself of the frown on his face.

"Yes," she answered, "think of it. After working

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all day, I have to sit and watch the telephone till ten o'clock."

"You can sit in your own room, can't you, while you attend to that?"

"Oh, say, I forgot to tell you. I'm a neighbor of yours now."

"How's that?"

"She just told me that I should take the little room next to the bathroom on this floor, and I took it."

"I have no objections."

"You haven't? How nice of you! Say, what time is it?"

"It's about eight o'clock."

"Well, I must go. Do get rid of the blues, Fred. You'll have to come to see me now, sometimes. Goodbye."

She was gone but a few minutes and he had just stretched himself out again, when someone else rapped on the door. This time it was Purton. He had expected some "friends" but they had not appeared. He knew that the weather had kept them away, and after having spent an hour of railing against that weather, he had come down stairs to do so with Fred's co-operation.

"Say," cried Mr. Purton suddenly in the midst of a long sentence on the rottenness of storms, "I smell perfume. You don't mean to say that you've had a fair damsel here, do you?"

"Have you any objections to my having fair damsels here?"

"Not at all. In fact, I am rather—rather interested."

Fred did not answer him.

"If I'm not mistaken, I saw the chamber maid coming from your direction. Now confess."

"I have nothing to confess," said Fred trying hard

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to hide his disgust, "she's a friend of mine. I secured this job for her."

"That's better yet."

"Oh, Purton, please cut that out."

"I suppose you want me to think that you are not at all interested in such awful things," he said crossing his legs and clasping his hands on his upper knee.

"No sir. I never try to make any one believe I am anything that I am not. I am not any more of a prude than you are; but I hate to hear anything vulgarized, especially anything like that."

"Well, now look here. What in what I've said is vulgar?"

"You may have said nothing that was vulgar but your allusions struck me that way."

"That's because your mind is bad, and you see things that way."

"That may be, and if so there's all the more reason for your being careful about what you say to me."

"Allusions! How we do like to cover things up. It's all right for everybody to spend nine-tenths of the time thinking about these things, but if you're brave enough to tell the truth, to speak some of your thoughts, then—."

"I deny that I spend nine-tenths of my time thinking about these things, even if you do."

"Everybody denies it."

"Nor am I afraid of the truth."

"Look here," cried Purton moving his chair nearer to the cot, "Let us not talk about you. You may be an abnormal man, and it isn't your fault if you are. You look at me as if I have said something horrible, something insulting about your friend. I consider myself the very model of manhood, don't forget. I wouldn't insult your friend or anybody else, nor would I hurt your friend or do the least harmful thing to

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any woman. Mark that. But. Take your friend for instance. Her chances for getting married are not many, you'll admit that. But is she any less human? Can't her normal animal desires, we are all animals, first and last, can't her desires be normal or possibly even stronger than the normal, even though her chances for getting married may be very small? Do you know what is happening? That girl is thinking of men nine-tenths of the time, unless she is abnormal as you are. Supposing she is normal, she is really suffering. Nature makes her demands and you and everybody else, whatever your own crazy notions about the things may be, have to—to say the least—you have to listen to her. I'm sorry for girls like that, Kaye, really I am, And if you can satisfy her desires so she can go about her business with a clearer head —of course without harming her—why shouldn't one do that."

"Oh, quit Purton, Let's talk about something else."

"What's the matter with this? It's the all consuming question you know."

"I don't know."

"That's the reason everybody about the school knows you for an old Grandma."

Fred was taken aback by the unexpected allusion to his backwardness and the idea that the boys in the school had been considering that. Life had been getting too heavy for him as it was and he envied those who got so much more out of it than he. In spite of the fact that Purton's arguments sickened him, he began to feel that there was something in what his visitor was saying.

"I really think," answered Fred, smiling a bit, "that you fellows who are constantly harping on the

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all-consumingness of this thing are abnormal. There's something wrong with you."

"What's the use arguing like that. We can go on talking that way forever. You call me abnormal and I'll call you abnormal. Take the specialists and see what opinions they have. Talk to a doctor about it. I had a friend in Albany who was one of the best doctors in the city, and probably better than some of the famous fellows here in this place, but you don't happen to hear about him. You ought to hear what he said about the fellows like you who go along all your lives fooling yourselves. You will suffer for it some day."

"There is no sense in being extreme in either direction. To healthy people love is infinitely more beautiful and more worth while. It is positively annoying to hear you fellows talk about the all consumingness of sex lust. I deny it. There are things in this world that are much more all-consuming. You are not the only one I've heard talk like that. I meet people who drum these things into my ears every other day."

"I know what you mean," said Mr. Purton very much hurt and rising to go, "Why don't you say it. If I am a degenerate in one direction you are in the other."

"I didn't say anything about your being a degenerate, come sit down Purton. We are only arguing. I was defending my position and you were defending yours."

"Yes," said Purton retaking his seat, "but what gets me mad is to hear you goody-goods attack us because we tell the truth. Your ideas come from lies and hypocrisy. The people who were responsible for that morality were the most awful degenerates that ever lived. In their day the respectable people were openly

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polygamists and the morality they handed down you make your bows to."

Fred laughed heartily. "You're all right, Purton, but you're mistaken. I do not bow to that morality at all. I just don't believe it is right to wear your mind out in sensuality."

"I don't see that it's any less a matter of wearing your mind out when you keep dreaming about these things day and night for twenty or thirty years or as with some people, for their whole lifetimes."

Fred laughed again. He was already in a better mood. He enjoyed Purton's excitedness and began to agree with him as much as he could. They had a real good time continuing the argument, even getting very humorous over it, until half past ten. Purton was sure that he had completely vanquished his antagonist, and Fred thought he had had a great deal of fun with him. And when Purton left Fred's brain was on fire. He knew, he was certain, that he didn't agree with Purton, but he was not quite so sure as he would have been had Purton argued less capably.

Fred had enjoyed the talk. He felt better than he had felt in a long while and hoped to be able to sleep well that night, but when he was alone, he began to wish Purton hadn't left so soon. He was nervous. His head was very hot and he kept walking up and down his tiny room. At the window, he saw that the storm that had been raging in the early part of the evening was raging even more furiously then. The atmosphere was still rent by the whirling confusion, and again he saw the snow-blown lights and the dark indistinct shadows, fewer than before, still struggling in the gale. Again the thought came to him, "Souls lost in the mystery of life."

"Am *I* lost?" he asked himself, pressing his face against the cold window pane, and dwelling upon the

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experiences that his mind had hoarded. "What is going to become of me? What is the struggle all about? What am I going to get out of it? I have had absolutely nothing yet. I have hungered all my life. I fear he's right. I have hungered and hungered and hungered and have worn out my mind hungering. For what? I haven't tasted one bit of contentment yet. It's ever been *to-morrow,* and when the to-morrows came, it was still to-morrow. I have moped and hungered, always. Can it be that that was bothering me? Oh, it's ridiculous. They're crazy all of them. It isn't that at all. It wouldn't leave me a bit more contented, if I did satisfy that desire, I know it wouldn't."

He stood there gazing at the storm ridden street. It was so beautiful, and yet it loaded his heart with a great weight of sadness. It was so much a picture of what all of life seemed to him. Then it occured to him that perhaps he was abnormal. Why should he be so painfully sad at a sight that fills most people with laughter and joy. He recollected groups of youngsters and young people, as he had seen them at various times in his life playing with wind and snow. He thought of a laugh he had heard that very night as he had made his way home loaded with some of Androon's stock. "Stock," that is what he called it. The laugh had come from a group of two young men and two young women huddled into each other and plowing through the snow.

He sighed and the sound of that sigh alarmed him. It was like a voice coming from the depths. He looked about as if he expected to see some one behind him. "I guess I'm the only soul lost," he muttered, "they all seem to know where they are going to but I."

Again he paced the floor, standing still aggravated him, and sleep was impossible. More and more Pur-

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ton's ideas began to look logical, and without being aware of it, his own thoughts became more and more illogical. Things that were so clear to him before, became confused, and in the confusion his feverish judgment inclined in the direction of Purton's ideas.

He wished he could go to sleep. He must sleep or something terrible would happen to him before morning. He prepared for a hot bath. He took the hottest bath he could stand but sleep was as far off as it had been, in fact it was further. His blood was heated. Purton's ideas haunted him. He lay on his cot a while then suddenly arose and returned to the bathroom, stopping at the doorway to look about the hallway and to look carefully at Anna's door next to the bathroom.

Shutting the door on himself, he leaned against it inside, and buried his head in his arm, admonished himself strongly and returned to his room.

But something was happening to him. He was being torn by vague incomprehensible forces. One moment he cursed Purton for having come to see him and the next he decided that Purton was right; while his pent up, stinted desires were brewing into a storm capable of more devastation than the storm that raged without.

It was half past eleven when the storm within him had reached its severest stage and Fred following an overpowering impulse made his way out into the hallway again. It was unendurable. He had to do something. He had to speak to some one or go crazy. He looked about him. The hallway was deserted. The bathroom door was open, but he took the door next to it.

Anna was frightened at Fred's appearance. She had gone to bed but was not yet asleep. She too had asked herself an innumerable number of questions an

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innumerable number of times, she too did not know what was to become of her and a quarrel with her landlady had helped to bring the tears to her pillow. She knew less of what was to become of her than Fred did and was possessed by greater fears. She welcomed him. With all her feminine nature she administered to his disturbed condition and took advantage of him.

There was some love in Fred for her, she reasoned, and analyzed all that he had ever done for her from a new point of view. She took advantage of his condition and bound him to herself, in a manner which, knowing his character, she felt to be unbreakable and was seized with an inward happiness that in its magnitude atoned for all the misery her poor girlhood had endured.

It was two o'clock in the winter night when Fred reached his room again, calling to himself in frightful inaudible tones, "What have I done?"

"What shall I do?" There was no answer save that which came in a ghostly idea of suicide, against which his whole nature and the memory of all his past hopes came to argue.

"No," he said to himself a dozen times over as he hurriedly dressed, hardly knowing what he was doing, "She'll expect me to marry her. That's as much as suicide. How can I? It's just impossible, that's all there's to it. I'll never be a lawyer. No it is impossible. I can not—dare not—go back to the farm. I can't go back to the shop. She'll drag me down with her. Yet, haven't I dragged her down like a scoundrel? Think of me doing such a thing. No, no, it is impossible! If I give her the hundred dollars, she'll go away with the fear of bringing another miserable little sufferer into the world. If I stay she won't do that. I know she won't. Why should we bring more sufferers into the world. I wouldn't inflict this on any

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human or other kind of soul. It's dreadful, dreadful, dreadful. What shall I do?"

His face was wet with perspiration. He looked at the towels hanging near his bed, and at the bed sheet remembering having heard of people who hanged themselves with these things.

He wrapped up the few things that he could not part with and putting on his overcoat, took hold of the door knob and stopped to think a moment before he opened it.

"I ought to stay and make the best of it. She's human like everybody else and she's a very good girl. But I can't, I just can't. It's wrong! It's beastly. How can I face her now. It's revolting, it's disgusting! Oh, damn that fellow for ever coming near me with his beastly—but I knew all that anyway. No use putting the blame off on somebody else. Oh, ugh, I'm sick of myself. There's no way out. If I stay she'll do nothing so as to hang on to me, poor Anna! How can I take care of her. My school, my debts—Mother —William! There's no way out!"

He opened the door, locked it behind him and stole down stairs and out into the biting fury, a soul, lost, in the mystery of life, for whom the street lights dazzled in the whirl, directing nowhere.

CHAPTER XV.

Alone again, Anna drew the quilt over her head, curled up like a frightened child, and began to analyze the situation which was now most confusing to her.

"What was the matter with him?" she asked herself.

She was a little anxious about the thing. She felt herself trembling uncontrollably, her head was burn-

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ing with fever and she was afraid that she was getting sick; but she never in all her life had been so happy. She never had had so much to look forward to. She had never been so hopeful. All the weight of uncertainty was leaving her, yet, she felt that her whole life time of notions had been overturned. Propriety itself had been trampled upon.

"But after all," she told herself, "that was nothing." She was glad she had done what she did. He would surely marry her. She was the most fortunate girl on earth. No man in all the world was more just than he, more reliable! Such a man for a husband! Oh, no, she would not yield! Under no circumstance! She felt somewhat guilty, remembering that she had really tricked him, but then why did he come in at that time? She would devote her whole life to serving him. She would make up for that. Oh, yes, he must marry her. He was not the kind to leave a girl like that. He never did a mean thing in his life. She thought of all the beautiful things his dear mother, her mother too, now, had told her about him. He was by far the most beautiful man that any girl could find. How fortunate she was!

Worried and doubtful at times yet happy, extremely happy at other times, she lay through the small hours of the night, thinking, thinking, and thinking, till when dawn came she was exhausted and fell asleep.

The hour for getting up, passed. At eight o'clock she woke. With the flood of light inundating her consciousness, when she opened her eyes, came the thoughts and feelings of the night before. She looked at the clock and hurried out of bed, saying as she jumped, "Here's where I lose my job."

"But what do I care now," she thought, "dear, dear Fred'll take care of me."

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She recollected every word he had said, and felt that it was going to be hard to face him at first. Suddenly the door opened and the landlady standing in the doorway greeted her with, "What is the matter with you this morning?"

Anna was unable to answer. How could she tell what was the matter with her?

"You can't keep late hours and work here," went on the landlady growing more angry because of Anna's silence.

"This is the first time it has happened since I've been here," said Anna without looking in her direction.

"You haven't been here so very long. Here it's nine o'clock and me thinkin' you've been working all morning, and me with only two girls. I don't think I ought to stand for that. Nine o'clock. Not a bit of work done on this floor yet. I guess you had better be looking out for some other work."

"I don't need your job," said Anna nervously.

"All right then you can go at once. I paid you yesterday so I don't owe you anything."

With this the landlady left her to herself, and she, excited and nervous began to pack up her things. When the worn out old suit case had swallowed up all that belonged to her, she started out into the hallway and made for Fred's door. She rapped softly, once, twice, three times, but no answer came. She rapped again very loudly, but getting no response, started out with a heavy heart, for Matilda's little flat.

"He's gone to school already," she told herself and tiraded against herself for having awakened so late. "What will he think when he hears of my giving up the job? He'll think I am just going to throw myself upon him."

The ride downtown gave her time enough to think

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the matter over clearly and she regretted more than ever the loss of her job, for then it occurred to her that Fred was still studying and that to help her it might cost him the opportunity to finish his course. By the time she reached Matilda's flat, she decided to go looking for a job as soon as she had rested a bit and before Fred learned of the loss of this one.

"I have lost my job," she said smilingly to Matilda whom she found trying hard to rock baby Carl to sleep.

"I'm glad to see that you are happy about it," Matilda whispered in response, looking down at the closed eyelids of her baby.

"I've got lovely news to tell you," said Anna coloring up a bit with the fear that she might after all be counting her chickens before they were hatched, "Fred proposed to me."

"Well what do you think of that?" cried Matilda, "that is good news. You lucky, lucky girl."

Her exclamation had been slightly too strong for baby Carl who opened his eyes and began to howl. Matilda walked about the room shaking him lightly and violently, and, between snatches of her verbal efforts to pacify him, repeated her exclamation, added further and similar comments, and invited Anna to help herself to something to eat.

Carl Junior took the world frightfully hard. He would not be conciliated. Her attempts to quiet him having failed, she sat down in the rocker and in her weakness cried with him.

Anna was pale and very tired and sleepy and after she had had something to eat, Matilda advised her to go to bed and rest a while.

She went into the front room and she laid down, but she couldn't sleep. Her happiness became o'er shadowed by little doubts which were augmented as the minutes dragged by. Some time near noon she gave

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up trying to sleep and went into the kitchen to help Matilda and to talk to her.

They had their lunch and cleaned the flat from room to room. Anna hoped that late in the afternoon, when Fred was through with his work at Columbia, he would come to see her, but the afternoon wore on towards evening without his appearance.

Anna never forgot that evening. The morning wind had disappeared by the early afternoon and twilight came down upon a most peaceful winter world. As long as she lived Anna could remember that twilight and the lovely street lights and her own desire to have Fred come and her plan to go for a walk with him.

Suddenly there was a rap on the door and Matilda went to answer it. When she opened the door she found a post office messenger boy with a registered letter that had been sent special delivery. The letter was addressed to Miss Anna Blair in care of the landlady on Columbia Heights, and the lady had re-addressed it in care of Mr. Carl Henny.

Anna grabbed the letter as soon as the necessary signing was done and rushed into the front room to read it by herself.

There was something dubious about the looks of it and she tore open the envelope with shaky fingers. The letter read:

> Dear Anna:
>
> When you get this I shall be many miles away from New York. Forgive me, Anna, wretched weakling that I am—some day I shall make up for this. I cannot help doing what I am doing, try to understand me. All my life I have tried to befriend everybody, if I'm acting like a beast to you, can you forgive

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me, and feel that as soon as I can I'll make up for it? I am miserable as I possibly could be, and would be no pleasant companion to you, Anna. I'm sending you a hundred dollars. Use that, for God's sake, and see that you bring no other being into the world to suffer as we have had to suffer. I will not forget you, Anna, as soon as I'm able to help you. Something has been the matter with me—I'm a doomed man. FRED.

Things began to swim before her eyes and tears poured into them. She wiped her eyes, tore the letter into bits, hurriedly put on her out-door garments, and rushed into the kitchen and went straight for the door.

She looked like an insane woman and Matilda, alarmed ran to where she stood shaking with fright, and cried, "What is wrong, Anna? Tell me what is the matter."

"He's a dirty brute like all other men," she cried, shoving aside Matilda who had rushed to the door to keep her from going out.

"But where are you going?"

"I'm going to the police station. I'm going to fix him."

"Anna, for God's sake talk this matter over with me before you do anything rash. You may not understand. Let me read the letter."

"I tore it up into a thousand pieces and threw them out!"

"What did he say?"

"Tried to excuse his dirty mean trick, that's all," cried Anna, livid with rage, then remembering that she had taken advantage of him, she burst into tears.

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"What is he going to do? Why don't you tell me so I can understand?"

"There is nothing to tell you," she insisted, and stopped crying. "He p-proposed to me and then—now he has run away. But I'm going to send the police after him."

"Oh, for God's sake, Anna, don't do that. It is impossible. Fred is not that kind of a fellow."

She would have gone on pleading in his behalf, but saw that it was useless. All she said only seemed to aggravate Anna, and before she could begin to speak again, Anna had opened the door and rushed out.

Matilda was left alone, helpless, her awakened baby crying again. She lifted the youngster from his crib and began pacing the floor muttering as she went, "Oh, what misery there is in this world! Poor Anna! Poor Fred!"

She rocked her baby to sleep again, and driven by a sudden impulse hurried into the front room. Upon the disheveled bed she found a heap of bits of paper. Try as she would, it was impossible to decipher a single word. She soon abandoned the attempt and was about to start back to the kitchen when her eyes fell upon a bit of reddish yellow paper in the corner opposite the bed. She stooped and picked it up. She clutched the bit of paper and looked about curiously. "Fred must have sent it to her," she thought, "and she's not aware of it."

It was a hundred dollar bill and Matilda was actually afraid of it. She pinned it carefully to the inside of her waist and returned to the kitchen where baby Carl was wailing bitterly again. She lifted the youngster from his crib and sat down with him on her lap, in the rocking chair.

"He is going to be a sickly boy," she thought, "always crying so bitterly. What can I do with him?"

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The rocking put him to sleep and Matilda sat thinking about her sick boy, with much dread and fear. His father was going down perceptibly. Fred whom she looked upon as a stand by, upon whom she could depend for assistance whenever she was dangerously in need of help, was gone. All week long, Carl's unshakable gloom, and the baby's incessant crying filled her mind with racking fear. Fear for the future of the little family and above all fear for the future of her little son. She knew that Carl was going rapidly and resigned herself to her fate; but the news that Fred had gone filled her with great dread and anguish, as if she had been relying upon his help in the event of Carl's death.

As she sat there with the hundred dollar bill pinned to her waist her thoughts intensified her dread. She rose from the rocker and as she did so one of baby Carl's red, little feet was uncovered. Matilda kissed it and covered it up quickly, but when she paced the floor with him, that little foot was ever before her mind and she repeatedly wanted to know from her unanswering God what bleeding that little foot would have to do. The perspiration came to her forehead. She ran to the door, opened it and carefully looked about. No one was coming. She closed the door and locked it and then ran up to the window in the front room. No one could see her there. The black iron fire escape was without eyes.

In the gloomy darkness of her little flat, she glided about spectre-like and finally found a safe spot where she could hide the bit of yellow paper. The framework of the door, connecting the front room with the room next to it, was loose. Between wood and plaster, at the top, was a crevice. Into that crevice she forced the bill, then opened the window so that it should appear. that someone had come through the fire-escape.

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"Poor, poor Anna," she cried, the tears streaming down her cheeks. "It's murder, downright murder. God forgive me."

She placed her baby back into his crib and knelt beside it.

"Oh, God forgive me," she cried, "I do it for my baby. My poor baby, what will become of him? What will become of us? Oh, God have mercy on me, I'd never do that for myself."

She ceased crying and began to pace the room again. She promised herself to befriend Anna in every way she could. "Surely she doesn't know anything about it, or she would never have allowed it to lay there and she has destroyed the letter. It's just like Fred to merely enclose the money and say nothing about it in his letter. Anna, poor Anna! She has no baby to support. Suppose she gets angry and says she won't touch his money, what then? She might even tear the bill up as she tore the letter."

Arguing with herself thus, she sought in a thousand ways to justify her act, ending every phrase, every excuse, with heart-rending exclamations of sorrowful regret. "O, God have mercy!"

A voice within her cried out against her act. Told her it was not only theft but murder, but it was as if she had been baring her own flesh to the whip to save her baby the lashes, she forced herself to remain in the kitchen till Carl came home and made it too late.

It was dark when he came home. He threw his dinner pail down upon the chair, took off his overcoat and the rag he had wound about his neck and began to grumble about the beastly weather, his wretchedness, the management of the shop and their manner of dealing with him.

He opened the door leading to the bedrooms and a cold draught of wind swept over him.

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"The window is open, are you crazy?" he cried.

"I didn't open it," she replied, her cheeks turning red.

"Well, now, who could have opened it, if you haven't opened it?" he bellowed impatiently and went in to shut it.

"What are you yelling about?" she yelled after him.

"You ought to have sense enough to keep the windows closed in weather like this," he called back from the front room.

"Suppose I didn't open any windows?"

"Well, who did then, I'd like to know?"

"Why don't you find out. Anna was in there."

"What has Anna been doing there?"

"Say, what is the matter with you?" she cried unable any longer to keep back her tears. "You'd think I haven't enough to suffer, the way he comes home yelling at me."

"I do my share of suffering, believe me."

"I'm sure I'm not to blame for your suffering."

Without making any other reply, Carl went back into the front room and clothes and all, got into bed.

It took her a long time, when supper was ready, to get him to come down and partake of it. When he did come down he looked so wan and worn out she was sorry for having been impatient with him.

He sat down and ate what she gave him in silence. Her face appeared so wan and sorrowful and he thought that what he had said to her was the cause of it. How he regretted his lack of self-control. But he could not excuse himself. The words he was on the verge of saying, several times, he could not utter.

They were still eating their supper when Anna returned. Her hat was not on straight, her hair was falling under it, her eyes were red and moist, and her

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shoes were wet with the snow that had melted on them.

She greeted Carl by nodding her head then proceeded to take off her things.

Matilda's nervousness increased. She could hardly stand on her feet. The terror lest Anna might after all be aware of that bill, came upon her and made her heart beat so violently, she couldn't speak. She found a few things that she could do or make believe she was doing, with her back turned to the table. When she recomposed herself and regained her voice, she begged Anna to go to the table and have something to eat. She was glad to hear Carl insist on her coming to the table, and Anna did finally take her seat there and with a voice half sobbing and half angry told Carl about all that had happened, as much as she had told Matilda, all that she wanted them to think had happened.

Anna had been eating very little, however, when she thought of the hundred dollar bill again. She had been thinking and worrying about it all the way back in her aimless wandering about the slum streets. In fact, it had been the cause of her hurried return. She might have wandered on for many hours more but for the fear that it might disappear. It had fallen from the envelope. She remembered seeing it. In her highly excited state she had forgotten it and had rushed out. When she arrived at Henny's it had again escaped her troubled mind; but while relating her story to Carl she thought of it again, and, without saying a word she rose and ran into the front room to look for it.

She lit the gas and hurriedly glanced about the room. The image of the bill which she had expected to see immediately upon lighting the gas was not there. The thought of its possible loss almost took the breath away from her.

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"Matilda," she cried, "Matilda, have you seen the money?"

"The money?" exclaimed Matilda, trembling, "No, I didn't see the money. What money?"

Anna dropped to her knees, searchingly glanced with terror stricken eyes into the corners and under the bed; but could not locate it. She rose dizzy, her head swimming, all things whirling about her. She regained control of herself and pulled the bed out of its place. She pulled at the bedding and shook each piece. Unable to find it, the dizzy spell came upon her again. She grabbed at the bed-stead and closing her eyes, hung on screaming at the top of her voice, "My money is gone, my money is gone!"

Carl rushed into the front room to quiet her and Matilda grabbed baby Carl from his crib in the hope that his crying would justify her remaining in the kitchen.

Carl searched for Anna and tried to pacify her as he searched. Again every space of the floor was examined and every article in the room was pulled out of place and shaken, but the money was gone.

Anna's sobbing and terror stricken exclamations justified Matilda's crying with her, and rocking her baby in her arms, she tried to plead with her to wait, that it might yet be found.

Carl stood there thinking awhile then suddenly he called their attention to an idea that struck him.

"Say," he began, "I know what has happened."

Both women stared inquiringly.

"When I came home to-night I saw this window open. I gave Mat the devil for having the window open on a day like this, and she claimed that she hadn't opened it at all, that she hadn't even been near that window to-day. I wondered how this window could

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be opened when she wasn't even in here. Did you open it, Anna?"

Anna made no reply at all as if she hadn't heard a word that he had said.

"Why didn't you take it with you when you saw it in the envelope?" asked Matilda, "how could you have left it? Maybe you tore it up with the letter."

"No, I didn't," said Anna stopping her sobbing, "I saw it right there on the floor. I remember seeing it there, plainly, only I was so upset that when I tore the letter up I forgot about it and rushed out."

Anna was suspicious of Carl and kept looking at him, but his manner of explaining himself dispelled the suspicion. That Matilda had taken it never occured to her. She sat down upon the bed and wept. They pleaded with her, promised to befriend her, not to let her go under, whatever might happen; but it was useless. She threatened to commit suicide and Matilda prayed fervently for the power—the courage to take the bill from its hiding place and give it to her, but her prayer was unanswered, it was impossible.

She put her little son back into his crib and returned to plead with Anna. She pleaded half the night with her. Anna responded with tears, only, and finally promised that if things were all right by a certain time she would accept Matilda's offer to plow her way through life with her, but if things were not all right by that time there was but one thing to do and that was suicide. Matilda understood and way into the depths of that night she rung her hands and felt upon her conscience the burden of murder.

CHAPTER XVI.

Anna did not commit suicide, nor did she at any time attempt to do so nor make or even vaguely form-

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ulate any plans for doing so. There was something in her unhappy, shallow life, unhappy and shallow as it was, which held her to it. It seemed impossible to her, despite the fact that more and more she considered herself guilty of having taken advantage of him as the dreary days went by, that Fred should have left her in so helpless and hopeless a condition unless he were deranged. She felt certain that if he ever was able to he would make full reparation. During gloomier moments, she saw the thing from a different point of view, blaming herself and her unfortunate personality that seemed to have been so unattractive. At all times the fear of bringing a child into the world weighed upon her with telling effect. Though there were flashing moments when even that cloud revealed the star-light of a silver lining.

She dreaded going back to Androon's and to the men and women employed there, all manner of rumors having already been circulated, but that was the only thing left for her to do. She could not afford the time it would take to find another place and so called upon Mr. Androon who reinstated her in her former position.

The fear of what might happen and the shame of what had happened had driven her into herself and she kept away from everybody, and in time everybody learned to leave her alone, to say only what was absolutely necessary to her and greet her with a sort of silent reverence.

Every morning began and every evening ended with bitter prayers pouring out of the eyes of her soul in tears that sank into her pillow, and often Matilda, in making her bed would see the wet pillow and add her tears to them. But when a good number of weeks had gone by and had proven to her, beyond a doubt, that her apprehensions had been groundless, she fell

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back, as it were, into a melancholy state of contentment. Content to do what good she could for Matilda and her baby or even others, expecting little and therefore seeking little, feeding her soul upon the vague unformed hope of some kind of compensation with Fred's effigy floating through the cloud-like elements of her dreams; weeping upon her pillow, when what disappointment had left of her girlhood, revolted against the eventlessness of the days that came and went.

During the day she merely moved about like an automaton. Whatever living she did, she did at night, lying awake through half of it, thinking till too weary to think. Always she sought for the cause of his fleeing from her. She would tell herself repeatedly that he had been too good for one like herself, but with her heart loaded down with pain and tears oozing out of her eyes, she would ask herself whether she was so horrible as to make him prefer giving up his home and his profession to risking the horror of remaining with her. She would recall every image she had ever thrown upon her looking glass and seeing those images with their ugliness, exaggerated by her state of mind, she would weep to think that life had been so unfair to her. But as the days and weeks and months went by, Anna learned to seek shelter in resignation.

Carl wasted away, slowly. By the time his little son reached his second year, he was forced to give up his work and Matilda changed places with him. She went to work in Mr. Androon's shop while he remained at home with baby Carl.

Only three times, he roused enough ambition in himself to leave the house for one of the benches in the dirty little park several blocks away; but most of the time he sat near one of his front room windows,

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gazing down upon the crowds in the street, and forcing baby Carl to cry for the out doors in vain.

If baby Carl could have remembered all or part of what he lived through during that period, he would have had very little love for his father, who ill and cranky was the constant source of the youngster's wailing.

Grumbling and complaining, Carl dragged himself through the autumn and early winter months, then what little strength he had, gave way and he took to his bed, where he fell into an unbreakable stolidity which made communication with him, almost impossible.

Then came a Monday morning in the latter part of February when the great sleep that had filled him with drowsiness during the last few weeks of his life, came to claim all of his consciousness and to give him the rest that approaching death had taught him to crave.

Matilda had long before that resigned herself to the inevitable, yet when the last moment came, she wept as if it had been some calamity that she had not at all expected.

To baby Carl all that happened was queer, out of the ordinary, and extremely terrifying. The lowered light in the front room, the coming of strange men, the solemnity with which they did their gruesome work, his mother's incessant weeping and the hush in everybody's voice made the very strongest impression yet made upon his little baby mind. It was as if the river of his life had its source in the lake-like darkness of those three days.

A week after Carl's death, Matilda moved away from the little flat that had become unbearable to her, and Anna went with her. The owner of a four-story, dirty tenement some ten blocks north of where she

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had been living offered Matilda half her rent in exchange for her services as janitress. She was to occupy the small ground floor flat, and pay the other half of the rent which consisted of five dollars.

Part of her housekeeping requirements having been provided for, she began to look about for work with which to earn the rest of them. She was informed of a firm that gave out work to be done by women in Matilda's circumstances. The work consisted of knitting tiny baby moccasins out of wool yarn which they supplied. Matilda found that by knitting rapidly when those duties of janitress and motherhood that were unavoidable were done, she could earn the other half of her rent. She worked willingly often expressing inwardly her gratefulness for having been able to manage so well. Anna was a good girl and upon her return from the shop was very helpful in making the evening meal and later in washing the dishes with her; and Matilda, taking advantage of her goodness did more knitting. With what Anna paid for her board, Matilda bought the food she needed for the three of them and what extra work she did gave her the opportunity to lay by a "penny" so as to have it when it was badly needed.

Anna was kind enough to bring home, one day, a cloth picture book for little Carl and little Carl was good enough to play with that most of the day, gazing again and again with great admiration upon the ugly colored animal pictures, allowing Matilda to work with a minimum of interruption. Of course he grew tired of looking at it in time and cried a great deal, but Matilda learned to pay no heed to him and he learned to expect no relief from her, getting what solace he could from his crying, growing up yellow-skinned with tear-stained large eyes, vaguely reflecting in his little face the face his father had once loved so much.

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Busy as her fingers were at any time, in turning and twisting with growing rapidity the knitting needles and the skein of yarn, her mind was always weaving with much greater rapidity and skill the many hopes she entertained for her little son. She sat through the long hours day after day and dreamed of the great things he was going to do and the help she would manage to give him when he was older, entirely neglecting him meanwhile, as he grew and cried by her side.

Every morning baby Carl in his attempts to gain her attention would go through a regular program of activities, and every morning he suffered the same defeat. Immediately after breakfast Matilda would rush to her knitting. Two hours later baby Carl would awake and call for her assistance to be dressed. Always Matilda wanted to finish some one part of her work and would let him cry himself hoarse before she would attend to him. When he was finally dressed she would serve him with his breakfast and go back to her knitting while he ate. When through with his breakfast he would begin to tug at her for permission to go out doors. As soon as he would realize that his begging was useless, he would begin to scream with anger. Matilda would refrain from punishing him, for no mother ever loved her child more than Matilda loved this poor sickly looking baby, until her patience would be exhausted and then she would strike him. As if this were an indispensable part of the program, he seemed always to wait for it, immediately after, slinking off to the window he would pour out his little soul in long protracted wailing, while Matilda waxed regretful and expressed her regret in tears that dropped upon the wool of the tiny moccasins in the making.

Little Carl would cry till something in the red-

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brick-floored yard would attract his attention. Then the tears would cease to flow and his wailing would die down into a baby crowing that always relieved Matilda and inflamed her love for him. She would watch him then through the corners of her eyes and the tears would come rolling down her cheeks again as she made her solemn promises to give him a chance in life which had been denied his parents. Sometimes her emotions were intense enough to force her to lay her work aside and rush to him, pull the little bloodless forehead from the window-pane and passionately kiss it.

There were many things beyond that narrow window to fascinate him. Facing him was an old time back tenement with its many gaping windows so interesting to a curious little fellow. Coming out of and going into its black dilapidated doorway, were seen constantly no end of individuals fighting and quarreling, conversing boisterously, laughing and running, healthy people and cripples, young people, old people, and children. In one corner of the dirty enclosed yard was a great heap of dry-goods boxes in which and on which the children often played. Sometimes, at sight of the youngsters at play he would resume his persistent pleading for the privilege to join them, but in time he would give up, contented with all that he could get from watching them, jumping with them at excited moments, clapping his hands when a great deed was done or laughing and yelling when they laughed and yelled.

But the children were not always there. Sometimes they scattered to their holes as it were, and at other times they rushed through his hallway and out on the street, whereupon he would make for the front room, the cold atmosphere of which usually sent him back into the kitchen after awhile. When there were

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no children to watch and to envy he would stretch out upon the floor where his mother could see him occasionally and cry thinking of him, and there turn page after page of his picture book and gaze at and love his "anibals," among which he loved most dearly the big-eyed calf. Often after going around and greeting each with baby talk, the lion, cat, goat, piggy, gobbler, horsey, billy-goat, and the rest of his acquaintances there, he would go back to "Jonny-Calf," as he called it, and talk to it till he had expressed every thought he had ever had, and till he had repeated every sound he had ever heard, after which he would go back to plead for the right to answer the call of the out doors and, failing in that, to fall asleep on his little book.

When he fell asleep she would throw aside her knitting, lift him from the floor, kiss him over and over, lay him down upon his little bed, and stand there gazing at his sleeping face. Sometimes she would stand that way a long time, like one in a trance. Every feature of his dear little face captivated her and loaded her heart and brain with the deepest concern. Then she would return to her work, censuring herself for ever having struck him, asking herself how she could ever have done such a thing, the tears of remorseful regret making their way down her sallow cheeks. Then she would re-examine the images in her mind—the images of his sleeping baby face—they were as definite as if she were still gazing down upon them—dwelling longest upon the tear-stained eye-lids drawn tight and having written over them all the heartaches she had caused him, and upon the dear little feet that were to tread the highways of life and to bleed—who knows how much.

A Sunday came, when to his boundless delight, Aunt Ann dressed him warmly and took him out to see the leafless trees in the little park not far from where

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they lived, the patches of snow that lay on the raw worn lawn, and the children at play. It was the happiest time of his life but his confinement in the house had weakened him and Anna brought him back a sick baby.

That night he was taken with a very high fever and coughed very hoarsely and painfully, terrifying his anxious mother. She turned the kitchen chairs into a crib and carefully wrapping him with blankets, placed him upon it and sat down to watch beside him, sitting through the night, listening to his breathing, suffering intensely with every painful cough. Again and again the little face flushed red and its sleep was constantly disturbed by violent fits of coughing. After each of those fits he would open his eyes, stare appealingly at his mother and cry. She would lift him from the crib, shower kisses upon him, promise him untold treasures and walk the floor with him, her cheeks tight against his burning little forhead.

By turns throughout the night she sat watching him or walked the floor with him praying always to her God for the privilege of following wherever his little feet might have to go in the wild dream-worlds conjured up by her mother-love and mother-fear. Dawn came and found her still beside him, worn and exhausted, but most patient and ever more anxious,—indefatigable in the expression of the love within her.

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IN THE MAKING

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PART II

IN THE MAKING

CHAPTER I.

Several weeks went by. Carl never ceased begging for permission to go out into the yard. Then one day came warm and Matilda dressed him carefully and allowed him to go. She didn't take the time to escort him but getting his promise that he would not go way she opened the door and let him out.

Baby Carl made his way very carefully, like one who hadn't been on his feet for a long time. He felt his way along the wall of the hallway and issued carefully, step by step, into the yard. A little fellow, whom he had often seen and envied, was seated over a puddle of mud in the center of the yard and kept stirring it with a stick, entirely oblivious of Carl's approach. Fascinated by the little fellow whose companionship he craved, Carl approached him cautiously, his face lit up by the most pleasing smile he could put there. The little worker went right on with his work not even looking up.

Carl went nearer and nearer till his face was directly over the mud puddle. He was just going to sit down as the little stranger was sitting, when a volley of mud and the end of the flat stick struck him full in the face and took his breath away. Terrified and alarmed he managed to remain on his legs and when he caught his breath shrieked for help. The little culprit abandoning his mud puddle, clattered up

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the bare, wooden stairs of the rear tenement, like one possessed, and took refuge in his mother's kitchen.

When Matilda reached the side of her distracted son, he was standing in the center of the yard, his feet spread apart, every inch of his face and dress spattered with the ill-smelling mud. Angered by the interruption of her work, she dragged him in and gave vent to her feelings by giving him a licking. She cleaned him hurriedly and sitting him down on a chair, dared him to leave it on penalty of a harder licking. When she returned to her work and he had allowed his crying to subside a little, and began to think matters over, he came to an understanding of the situation as vastly different from the one his mother had as was his inexperienced mind from hers. To him there was something very mean about the whole business and he nursed a bitter feeling towards everything concerned. The little boy whose companionship he craved, whom he had been longing for great lengths of time to join, had hurt him. The mud was very unpleasant, nasty and hurt him too. But why should his mother have hurt him? She was not nice and he would tell Aunt Anna about it as soon as she came.

Later on when he had ceased crying entirely his little mind wandered in another direction. He had not yet seen those boxes in the corner. When his mother was busy again in the front room, he would go out quietly and he would see those boxes and he would walk into them. He would take a stick and he would hit that boy hard.

With the task of thinking and rethinking these thoughts, his little mind grew weary. He fell asleep, the little head slowly sliding down the chair back towards his right. He dreamt that a frightful combination of mud, the little boy and his mother was after him. The little head kept going down and down

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till suddenly with a thump and a shriek he fell to the floor.

Matilda rushed towards him, lifted him in her arms, pressed his little cheek against hers, offered him baby consolation and walked the floor with him.

The harder he cried, the kinder was Matilda and the more valuable became her promises, so he cried as hard as he could till he became tired and stopped for a while. However, seeing that the promises were not being carried out and that his mother's alarm subsided as his crying subsided, he soon began to cry again, making Matilda feel that he must have hurt himself seriously. Instead of promising things to him now, she began to offer them to him. She offered him bread and butter first, but desiring some of the cakes Anna had brought home the night before, he shook his head violently at mention of bread and butter and cried as much louder as his little lungs would serve him, till his mother hit upon a new idea.

"Oh, I know what I'll give baby," she said as much overjoyed at the idea as he could have been, "Nice little cakes."

The word "cakes" brought sweet childish laughter to his face and into his voice. She assumed great haste inspiring still greater laughter, and keeping him on her arms went to the place where she kept them and gave him one. That was not enough so he cried for more. When he had two he cried for still more. Anxious to get back to her knitting, her limbs aching to fall back into her accustomed position, she gave him two more. He had a vague notion that crying for still more was liable to end disastrously and ceased crying, submitting to replacement on the chair.

Next day Carl was given an opportunity to carry out the plot he had hatched. The little stranger was again engaged in stirring the mud puddle in the cen-

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ter of the court yard and half a dozen of the youngsters were playing with and about him. Matilda was in the front room doing her hurried weekly cleaning. He stole out cautiously and made for the group in the yard.

They were very busy every one of them. So busy, that many of them were not aware of the new comer's presence. With the utmost care he made his way into the center of the group and the little ruffian of whom he was most afraid, in instructing each of them in what he or she was to do gave Carl some task without knowing or stopping to find out who it was that he was dealing with.

Carl was overjoyed. He was still very cautious, fearing that something might yet come down upon him suddenly, but he worked with a will anxious to do the very best he could do, and to meet with favor in the eyes of the little tyrant whom the youngsters were calling "Jimmy."

Matilda discovered later that he was gone and rushed out in search of him. Finding him most happily engaged in making mud pies, as if he had years of experience behind him, she decided not to disturb him and returned to her work.

Carl went on making mud pies, intoxicated with the something that emanated from each of the little bodies and from Jimmie in particular. It was their presence alone which was balm to the long craving of his social instinct.

Everything went well till Jimmie's sister who had suddenly appeared, returned with an apple in her hand. Jimmie asked her for a "bite" which she felt obliged to allow him to take. But Jimmie's jaws closed down upon about four-fifths of the fruit and his little sister thereupon sent forth a yell that brought several women to several windows, and started for her mother loaded

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with charges. Fearing that she would report him before he got his own apple, almost choking with the bite he had taken, Jimmie shoved his sister down a few steps leading up to the doorway of the rear tenement, hurried up to the kitchen of his own home, demanded and received his apple, and dashed down again, meeting his sister half way up the stairs of the first flight, crying pathetically.

In the court-yard, Carl was building a house with a heap of dried mud pies and glancing furtively at his sole companion who was eating away at a huge piece of bread smeared with jelly and who refused to give Carl a piece threatening to strike him if he approached too near. When Jimmie joined them and sat down to eat his apple, Carl ceased building houses and stared, red with envy, from one fellow to the other. His desire to have a piece of that apple became great enough to deprive him of his scruples. He abandoned his architectural task and sidled up to Jimmie, his fixed gaze making great demands on Jimmie's poor generosity. Jimmie held the fast disappearing apple in his left hand and with his right he played with a small heap of sand which they had dug from between the bricks. Carl's desire became intense. He sidled up still closer. Jimmie watched him carefully and smiled with affected friendliness, but as soon as he thought Carl was too near, he threw a handful of sand into the youngster's face and with fiendish delight sat there admiring his handiwork till Matilda rushed out in response to the wailing of her baby, when he took to his heels and again clattered up the wooden stairway.

For a long time after that, Carl hung about his own doorway in mortal terror of the little tyrant. Many a time he ran from him in his dreams, and his little mind was constantly harassed by Jimmy's shadow.

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In spite of all the heart flutterings the little monster had caused him, in spite of the nervous twitches that he suffered through him, little Carl had a peculiar admiration for the little bully and was willing to go a long way to earn his friendship. He realized, that there would be no peace until he had that friendship and made some plans for getting it, but try as he would he could do nothing but run as soon as the little tyrant appeared.

A good many weeks with the constant repetition of terror inspiring acts went by, and Carl began to feel sensations of increasing strength, and as he grew stronger he began to look at Jimmie with correspondingly less fear although he still ran from sight of him.

Jimmie on the other hand, had not been slow in sensing his power over the youngster and enjoyed making use of it, going out of his way to do so, though he never succeeded in laying his hands upon his victim.

So passed the summer away and another winter came and Matilda forced Carl to remain within doors again. Again his little lungs were taxed to the utmost in resenting his bondage, but his mother was as obdurate as ever. The number of times he was permitted to go out that winter were very few while the number of times he was forced to his little bed with colds and fevers, were many. The number of nights that Matilda sat by his bedside sapped her strength, but the more she did so, the more passionate grew her love for him.

When spring came, she permitted him to go out again. There were then other children in that courtyard and Jimmie, as ever, ruled among them. Carl determined to face him, though the long winter with its many illnesses had increased his dread of the little bully.

The first day he went out, he wasn't gone a

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few minutes before Matilda heard his cry for help. She found him lying on the floor of the court-yard with Jimmie on top of him. He was struggling to free himself and incidentally pulled his opponent's hair with both hands, so that Jimime couldn't have left him if he had wanted to.

Matilda separated them quickly enough and both retired crying. Carl had got the worst of it, but his antagonist was not over anxious for a repetition of that victory, and though Carl was still afraid of Jimmie, he had become conscious of what little strength he possessed. When he stood near his window or ventured into the yard near the doorway after that he was very defiant, retreating only when that move became imperative.

One evening Anna came home with a bag of cherry drops. Carl was given two of them and made it his business to see where his mother put the rest of them. Before falling asleep that night he hit upon the plan of getting hold of that bag of cherry drops and trying to buy Jimmie's friendship with them. Accordingly next day he waited for an opportunity to carry out that plan. His mother was going to sweep the hallway and cautioned him against leaving the house before she returned. She had no sooner left the threshhold, however, when he tip-toed into the first bed-room and began climbing the bed post till he reached the shelf above it. There behind a box he found the bag of cherry drops, and, throwing it down upon his bed, he made his way down again. When below, he hastily took a handful of the drops, shoved them into his pocket, climbed the bed post again, and replaced the bag.

He secured permission later to go into the yard and stationing himself in the doorway, he began to suck one of the drops very conspicuously. One of the group

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of youngsters with Jimmie in the center, was the first to catch the bait. He hurried over to where Carl was standing and began to beg pitifully for "one."

Carl shook his sticky cheeks in the negative and the little fellow increased the fervor with which he begged, till Jimmie himself became aware of Carl's possessions and joined the little beggar. There was a grin on Jimmie's face that kept Carl from making any attempts to retreat, and when Jimmie offered peace by several repetitions of, "I won't hitche," Carl came forward a step or two.

By that time they were all around Carl, every face screwed up into an expression of appeal. Jimmie alone made a poor attempt at feigning indifference and kept striking the bricks with his stick, every once in a while insisting, "I won't hitche."

Carl was considerably doubtful about those assurances and trembled occasionally with the fear of what he *might* do, but he soon got over his fears and asked Jimmie to approach, calling upon him to see that the rest of them remained in their proper places. Jimmie right gladly did as was requested of him and Carl gave him a whole cherry drop. He shoved it right into his mouth and asked for more. When he had shoved the second one into his mouth and looked like a loaded pocket gopher, Jimmie wanted to know whether Carl had any for the rest of the "felliz."

Carl produced two dirty looking ones which stuck to his sticky fingers and Jimmie kept back the advancing "felliz" while he tried to break them up into enough "ones" to go round. Finally it devolved upon Jimmie himself to break them, Carl having failed, and being older, Jimmie was successful. From that time on they were friends.

Cherry drops are cheap and the bag Anna had brought home contained a good many of them. Day

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by day their number was reduced until there were none left. Matilda had been too busy to remember that there had been such a thing, and even if Anna had been at all interested in them she would have thought that Matilda had given them to him. At any rate Carl soon ceased worrying about what his mother might do if she found that the bag had disappeared.

In time Anna came home with other bags of cherry drops and Jimmie's friendship became an unbreakable habit. Every morning from the time he could get away from his breakfast table to the time Matilda forced him into bed, Carl was with Jimmie in that dirty court yard while Matilda increased her output of baby moccasins. What things he learned. Hardly an hour passed without his learning something that helped him to come to an understanding of what the world he found himself in, was. All the questions he used to ask, to his mother's annoyance, he asked Jimmie, and Jimmie always had a ready answer, and so it came about that Jimmie loomed up bigger, in his little mind, than anybody he knew.

That summer went by only too quickly and when winter came he was six years old and ready for school. He was not big for his age and Matilda having kept him home the year before to give him a better chance to grow, now sent him to the kindergarten.

Jimmie had painted school in the blackest of colors, but not only did Carl know that he would be forced to go there, but he really was curious to know what it was like, and though he wouldn't have told Jimmie just how he felt about it, he went to school on his first day, right happy to do so.

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CHAPTER II.

Carl's kindergarten days, as many as he had, were the brightest days of his school life. His mind was stirred by numerous ideals which were not quite clear to him. He was endlessly listening to stories and singing songs of birds and fields and animals, about which he knew so little. He heard stories of beautiful homes and children that were unreal to him, enjoying the music and the rhythm of his teacher's voice much more than all the vague ideas those stories awoke in him.

When the winter arrived, he was taken with a severe cold and one day after school, his teacher came to see him and brought him a flower. Carl's gratitude for her overwhelming kindness fired his little brain with a secret love for her greater than any love he had ever had for anything, and many an hour as he lay in his little sick bed, was made much easier by the dreams he wove about himself and his teacher.

In the school room, when he was well again he worshipped her, but the joy of taking her hand or of shoving up against her in some game, was destined to be irregular. He was sick many times that winter and his kindergarten days were reduced to less than a hundred, and when summer came his activities on the street with Jimmie and his gang robbed him of the greater part of the good he had derived from them.

The winter of continual sickness had consumed all that Matilda had saved up and forced her to desire to work with still less interruption. Her constant work had almost ruined her eyes and she was obliged to borrow from the little Anna had saved to get glasses and have her eyes treated. Rent was increased one month, food prices were steadily going up, and clothes

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wore out with increasing rapidity. Often in her desperation Matilda was tempted to open the bag hanging about her neck in which she kept that horrible hundred dollar bill, but always she resisted that desire, fearing the coming of a yet more desperate time.

Anna's kindness and self abnegation were the very pillar of Matilda's little home; yet Anna was unhappy and steadily grew more and more unhappy, keeping away from everybody and pining away for lack of social intercourse. She seldom expressed her discontent to Matilda, feeling that Matilda had trouble enough of her own. Often she sought to induce Matilda to go out with her evenings, while Carl was with Jimmie and his gang on the street, but always Matilda found it impossible. If Matilda was not knitting, she was busy cleaning. When she was through with the unavoidable cleaning she found a great deal of mending to do. She was only too glad that Carl had the congenial companion with whom to play and with whom he seemed never to get into trouble. So she would tell Anna. In fact, when Carl came in and bothered her, she induced him to go out again and to play with his friends.

And so little by little, Carl slowly drifted away from home. Neither Anna nor his mother had anything to offer him, not even the food he craved; while the world in which Jimmie ruled abounded in fascinations. Jimmie was two years older than he and not only could he "swipe" fruit from fruit-store displays but he knew where to get the Sunday paper funny sheets and could read enough to explain the colored caricatures to him. Oh, the hearty laughs they had, hid in the dry-goods boxes in the corner of the court yard. How they enjoyed the vile, mean, and cunning tricks played on this weakling and that. They found the strong always victorious and craved for strength.

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The fellow striving to do right was always the "ninny getting it in the neck."

So as the days went by the little tongues barely able to express the half-baked thoughts of their little brains, already turned and twisted in emulation of the Sunday funny page characters with their repartee, their slang expressions, their wretched jokes, and their allusions to the vulgar songs of the day. Hardly were the little hands capable of buttoning their own shoes, when they could perform with remarkable dexterity the funny page trickery.

As they learned, they grew; and in growing, needed much more nourishment than they got, and the little brains moulded by the "funny page" studied their surroundings for means of supplying their bodies, more satisfying than those of stealing apples, walking the streets and looking anxiously everywhere in the hope of coming upon such means.

One day in September, just before school was reopening, Jimmie led Carl to his uncle's butcher shop some three blocks away. They came before a small store window and stood some time gazing upon the large bald pig with his belly ripped open and his eyes touched with the agony of the moment of death, laughing at the apple, safe in the harmless teeth and at the grin upon the dead pig's face.

It was a dirty place and showed few signs of prosperity. Besides the pig, the window showed a small amount of wretched looking tripe and a few dead fowl. They went in to see the uncle.

"Hello, Uncle," said Jimmy modestly.

"Hello, Jimmie," replied the ruddy faced uncle, wiping his brow with his blood-stained apron, "Want a job?"

Jimmie expressed his willingness to take a job with great enthusiasm and the two boys were taken through

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the flesh-smelling meat market, out into the high fenced yard in the rear. They were told to remain there while the uncle re-entered his shop to return a few minutes later with the materials of the "job."

When left alone, Jimmie evinced a great deal of familiarity dancing about the ghastly objects and apparently having a very good time but try as he would to hide his feelings, Carl was horror stricken and refrained from moving from the spot where he had been left.

Upon a barrel in the center of the straw littered yard, lay the greater part of the headless carcass of a calf, its skin but partly removed. On a barrel near it lay the carcass of a pig in a position similar to the one in the window. Wherever he looked in that yard, there was some sign of death. The carcasses of pigs and cows hung on great iron hooks with their bellies ripped open and all their vitals dug out.

Carl shivered and wished he were home. He expressed his wish and was ridiculed in a friendly way by the experienced Jimmie. To show his friend that there was nothing to be afraid of. Jimmie danced about still more gleefully. Then as he hopped into the rear of the two carcasses in the center an idea struck him. Grabbing the tail of the calf in one hand and the tail of the pig in the other, he began to yell "giddyep, giddyyep," as if he were driving a team of horses.

This was very interesting to Carl and in a desperate attempt to appear courageous he too began to jump up and down, hysterically crying with him, "Giddyep."

The uncle came back with four live chickens and one by one chopped the creatures' heads off.

Only with his greatest efforts could Carl keep himself from crying out with fright and the half hour he spent helping them pick the feathers from the dead

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chickens after they had been thrust into boiling water, was the most dreadful half hour he had yet known, nor had there been one moment in all his life comparable to any moment in this half hour.

They were on their way out when he came upon the head belonging to the carcass of the little calf on the barrel. Of all the animals in his little picture book, he had loved the little calf most, and it seemed to him that the large glass eyes were the eyes of *his* little calf.

He screamed with horror and ran from the place with Jimmie after him. Jimmie ridiculed him and threatened to tell all the kids what a "cheeser" he was. Carl begged him not to, promising to go with him to get jobs, and not to scream like that again. It was however, a long time before Carl could get himself to walk out in the direction of that butcher shop, and for a long time Matilda did not know what was the matter with her little boy, who screamed in his sleep almost every night.

But Carl did go again as he had promised, and before long he was as familiar in that horrible, straw littered yard as Jimmie himself was, pulling the dead pig's nose, his ears and his tail, sticking pins into their carcasses, and shoving straw into their dead muzzles.

School opened again.

The first grade of school was not at all like the kindergarten nor were any of the other grades like it. The freedom he had had there and that above all things he needed, was denied him. The little body aching for exercise, for motion and activity was forced in between an iron framed seat and an iron framed desk, and the energy that wanted to express itself in activity was forced to boil and seethe within him.

Every morning he passed between the great building in which Anna had told him she worked, and the

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mysterious orphanage on his way to school, ready to follow the gang in pursuit of stray dogs, or youngsters belonging to other gangs, to jump on the back of ice wagons, and to play street games, constantly and untiringly on the alert against policemen, wagons, pedestrians, and other gangs.

Most of every day he spent in shifting himself about in his seat as much as he could, sitting up and sliding down; or in gazing out of the window upon the orphanage, while the teacher busied herself with the other fifty pupils in the room. But he was one of the fifty-one pupils—and every once in a while the teacher forced attention from him. The sea of numbers and the demand upon his memory—words, words, words,—were incomprehensible to him, for while he should have listened to explanations he was busy studying the orphanage and dreaming great dreams of "jobs," candy and strength with which to fight.

There were very few impressions made upon Carl during the two years that followed his year in the kindergarten. His busy teachers found little in him to interest them, and most of the time left him to himself. His constant dreaming made him appear stupid, and they treated him as if he were stupid, calling upon him but rarely. He caught enough during his days of dreaming to answer a few of the questions put to him and he answered well enough to go from grade to grade on trial. He was sent ahead each time because the Board of Education had passed a law forcing each teacher to promote a certain percentage of the number of her pupils.

One day towards the middle of his third school year, during a reading lesson Carl was engaged, as usual, dreaming that he was suddenly grown strong enough to lick all his enemies, and that he had found great riches and would be able to wallow in candy and

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cake and fruit. He was wandering about in the indefinable state or condition, a sort of a happy-hunting-ground world without wants or denials; when his teacher noticed that he was not paying attention and called upon him to read.

Carl did not hear her at all. She called upon him several times without getting a reply. The boys about him began to stare in his direction and to grin, while the boy back of him rose in his seat, lifted his open book and came down with it upon Carl's busy head.

Carl jumped as if the whole gang had suddenly pounced down upon him, frightened and bewildered. The youngsters roared at the sight of him and even the teacher laughed. The humiliation of his position was too much for him, and he fell upon his offending neighbor with nail and fist. The teacher rushed to the scene of war and grabbing Carl by the back of his neck, jerked him off his enemy and rushed him to the front of the room where she seated him on the floor before her feet, to "cool off."

By the time school was over that afternoon he had ceased crying and biting his nails and looked forward to meeting his enemy downstairs where the fight could be prolonged to a proper finish, but when time came to dismiss the class, his teacher refused to allow him to leave the room until the others had gone, and demanded that he remain on the floor till she was ready to attend to him.

He continued biting his nails and dropping tears down his dirty cheeks, while the teacher sat in dreadful silence making out her plans for the next day. Suddenly the door opened and another teacher came in. The two women conversed a while and then deliberately walked up to where he sat in humiliation.

"Look at it," said his teacher after she had whis-

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pered something he couldn't hear, "would you believe it?"

Carl forced his head down upon his ragged coat sleeve and hid his face, whereupon the teacher took him by the back of the neck and lifted him to his feet, while he pulled and bristled like a frightened kitten. She let go of him and continued speaking disparagingly of him while her friend looked at him with feigned disgust and horror.

When he was finally allowed to go, he ran for all he was worth determined never to come back again.

Jimmie knew something about playing truant and willingly conspired with him. Every day during the next week they kept in hiding during school hours and then, claiming to come from school, called on Jimmie's uncle in quests of jobs which they were sometimes given. At the end of the week, the truant officer called on Matilda and Carl had a most grievous time that evening. She threatened all kinds of punishments and seemed to be in earnest, weeping bitter tears as she scolded him. He promised to go to school regularly, to avoid a severe licking, and next morning he entered his classroom in bitter spirits, feeling very much out of place and defeated. It was his first attempt at truancy, but not his last.

CHAPTER III.

At the age of twelve, Carl was a sickly looking boy, smaller than he should have been, looking from out of the shell into which his environment had driven his little soul, like a beast at bay. Furtive, poisoned with bitterness, disobedient, revengeful, nursing his many sores, he lived with no other joy in his life, but that which he derived from doing the things he did

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against the will of those around him. He stole cakes from his mother's supply when she had them, stole long draughts of milk from his neighbor's milk bottles, and broke all laws against which he had been warned, when he thought he could do so without being detected. There was hardly a thing in his mind, or a being with whom he came in contact, that was not either entirely against him or nearly so. The war with school was growing more furious as he grew. The gangs on the street were now more savage having added strength to their perverted notions, and he never ventured very far out of his own territory. His own gang, held together by virtue of necessity were not bound by ties of endearment and the few years clearest in his mind were studded with bitter and sometimes bloody fights—bloody because Carl's underfed body had one most distracting defect—his nose bled with every blow. One member of his gang was like another and Jimmie was sometimes worst. He was older and stronger and his demands were often intolerable.

Carl's life was one of constant strife, yet in his morbid little soul—morbid with so much contention—there lurked a faint and indefinable desire for peace and seclusion.

Far from being a help to him, his mother unwittingly arrayed herself with the world of things against him. He had a queer knowledge of her love for him, and her advances, the evidences of her love, were unpleasant to him; while her constant admonitions were unbearable. She had thrown him out of her reach and he had learnt to live and thrive without her. All that he disliked, she ordered him to love, all that he wished and craved for, she ordered him to despise. There was but one redeeming feature about her—she was anxious to knit baby moccasins. So anxious was she to increase the number of moccasins she turned

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out that for the lack of time and energy, her commands were weak and her threats never carried out. He learned to evade both. He began to know just what to do in every embarrassing situation to pacify her and to send her back to her eternal knitting. To be sure, at times, he miscalculated and was obliged to take the punishments she administered, but the punishments themselves, were not only weakened by her love for him, but he had been strengthened by his gang life and could endure them more easily. He adopted the policy of keeping secret the things to which he knew she objected, and to say as little as possible no matter what she might say in scolding him.

Anna was the only being he knew, against whom there was no need of strife. Not that he had ever confided in her, but he felt that should she come upon any of his secret doings, there would be no cause for alarm. She pitied Matilda and never told her anything she found about Carl, but would talk to him herself about it. There was a time when a caress from Anna meant a great deal to him, but Anna had long since joined an evening school, and her presence became so great a rarity that in time her influence too, was dissipated.

The first part of that twelfth year went by without an unusual event. The all-consuming craving for cakes and candy kept Jimmie and himself very busy. They managed to play truant as always, and to keep out of the officer's hands. Carl's reputation in school was very bad and traveled ahead of him from teacher to teacher, and his vacant seat was not a thing for them to mourn about. To avoid the need of tolerating him and the trouble he was sure to cause, they did not report him to the truant officer very often and that individual had so many cases to attend to he did not always go to see Matilda when Carl was reported.

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After having spent three terms in a single grade, because of his truancy, he was shoved ahead into a certain Mrs. Bowen's class. Mrs. Bowen was a very young mother and had a boy of her own. He was a bad boy and so she liked bad boys and did not conceal her liking for Carl, a thing which he could not understand. To his utter consternation she called upon him one afternoon to stay and help her sharpen pencils.

Carl had never had such favors conferred upon him. He knew that most of his gang considered such a request as a manifestation of trust, and looked upon trust as nothing to be coveted, for it was something conferred upon goody-goody boys; and he would have resented the inference that he was of that class. However, the thing was done with such dispatch, and came as so great a surprise that before he had time to think the matter over the class was dismissed and he found himself awaiting her orders.

He was very glad to see her shut the door, for he would have been unable to do as she wanted him to with the possibility of some one of his gang looking in at him. She gave him the knife and the pencils, and took a knife herself, conversing with him as she helped him work and making him feel very much out of place. On the whole the half hour he spent with her was very hard on him and he tried to tell himself that it was disagreeable, but he left that room with a gnawing feeling at his heart. He remembered but little of what she had said, but the touch of her clean white hands, the smile on her pretty face, and the perfume that emanated from her were disturbing his peace. Something had been injected into his life that was foreign to his experiences and that gave him new sensations that night when he pressed his little eyes into his pillow. Something sprouted within him.

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As the days went by other and similar events took place that nurtured that growing thing and it might have o'er shadowed and in time killed the weeds already full grown about it, in his little soul, had not a most unfortunate accident ruthlessly stepped in upon it.

A case of small-pox in a village not far from the city sent official doctors into the public schools and the principals' offices were turned into hospitals. Streams of boys and girls with their sleeves turned up, poured through the toll gate of doctor and nurse. Carl was among them.

The vaccination on Carl's right arm was successful and soon bloomed forth in fiery red. It was winter time and Matilda kept him home to prevent his catching cold. At the end of the third day the thing looked queer, and by the end of the week the entire limb was swollen and every finger was as thick as the wrist of his other hand. Matilda abandoned her knitting one afternoon and locating the doctor fell in upon him with an hysterical outburst.

The doctor was in his reception room, where a number of patients were waiting for him. To avoid leaving her with them, he took her into his private office at once.

"If you are going to go on like this," he cried after shutting the door, "I'll put you out without looking at it."

He did look at it and squeezing the arm from one end to the other till the boy howled, he exclaimed, "He's been scratching it."

"He never touched it," she bellowed, "he's had that bandage on ever since you put it on."

"Look here madam," said the doctor with professional dignity, "I say he's been scratching it with his dirty finger nails."

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"I ain't touched it once," put in Carl betraying his fear of the terrible man.

Without paying any attention to him, the doctor sat down at his desk and went on addressing Matilda, "And if you want me to do anything for it, you had better calm yourself."

He wrote the prescription and handed it to her.

Matilda took the little piece of paper and left the office, her head fairly burning with the commotion of ideas in it. She went so hurriedly that Carl found it hard to keep up with her.

"If anything happens to that child," she murmured to herself, the tears pressing their way out of her eyes. "I'll make him suffer."

She had had the desire to say many things to him, but there had been more than one reason for her having failed to do so. She had been confined in her own four walls for so many years, she found it very hard to face people at all, and if she hadn't been alarmed and excited she would not have been able to say what she did. As she walked along rapidly she carried the image of the doctor along with her, and gathering the different things she wished she had said to him, she thundered them very boldly at him. Her mind worked wonderfully then. She composed the most clever and bitter things to say to him and replied for him with the weakest kind of rejoinders, till she felt him to be completely squelched and herself victorious.

Her way home could have been shorter than she made it. She came upon a street which she knew led to a certain triangular, open space, and she was suddenly possessed with a nameless longing to see that open space, and, much to Carl's misunderstanding, she took it.

In all the nine years since the death of her husband, she had visited that neighborhood but once, and that

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had been on a hurried visit. The death of Carl had still been fresh in her mind then, and the sadness that had sent her thither had soon after driven her back home.

School had already been dismissed and the building seemed deserted. Only a few stragglers, who, having paid some penalty by staying in, issued now and then, and hurried away on the stony sidewalk. Matilda lingered there some time, gazing from the orphanage to the factory building and the school. Suddenly the orphanage doors broken open and a stream of motherless youngsters, pressed into similarity, issued on their way to the riverside for an airing.

Carl could not understand just why his mother was interested in the "kids" nor did he understand just why she tightened her grip on his arm when they walked away—he did not see at all the tears that dropped out of her strained eyes.

There were many things Carl did not understand. So wholly was his mind taken up with getting things to eat and the few other problems of adjustment to his grim environment, that he habitually dismissed from his mind all perplexities that did not immediately concern the struggle for that adjustment. Nor did he listen attentively when Anna or his mother offered him information that might have answered some of the questions that had formed themselves in his mind, but that remained unanswered because he did not wish to take the trouble to have them answered.

"It seems funny, after all," she soliloquized, her soliloquy having been inspired by an ineffable tug at her heart that came with the associations that clung to the triangular space, the orphanage, the school and the factory building. "It does seem funny that God should allow us to suffer so at the changes he makes. Things don't seem to be worth very much when we

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have them, then when a long time passes, why should we feel so terrible? I look at that gloomy old building with its towers and seems to me I'd give all the rest of my life to be a little kid again with Anna and Carl—poor Carl. Nothing left of him now. And yet, what a time it was."

That Anna had been retrospective that evening as she took the opportunity to earn a few cents more by staying an hour later and working with the few invited to do so, was but one of those coincidences brought about so often by the silent forces of life—forces that make life more intricate and more beautiful and like the sunset after a gloomy day, put the artistic touches upon chaotic feelings of discontent. We need not analyze these forces, nor should we attempt to classify them with artificial terms and thereby blow them off to oblivion, but we all feel their effects, each and every one of us, even though the elite, the noble souled of the earth in their ignorant conceit attribute no such sensibility to those whom conditions condemn to a life without expression, who till and retill the soil of their souls and merely feel the verdure growing there without ever seeing it come to the surface; for it is a cursed verdure that turns ere it breaks to the light and grows down into the soil again.

The day had been a bitter one and Anna's heart was weak with the gnawing of discontent, but when she issued upon the street the sight of the orphanage to which she was so accustomed that its associations were often too dull to affect her, filled her this time again, with an unutterable yearning for what had been. She decided not to go to the evening school that night, and to hurry home to see whether she couldn't arouse Matilda from the stolidity brought upon her by the endless knitting of baby moccasins.

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She bought some candy, some little cakes, and a small package of tea and wended her way home.

When Anna arrived home, Carl was howling with agony and Matilda was treating his arm as she had been instructed to. When the arm was again bandaged, Anna reduced his crying by offering him the whole bag of candy, and Matilda filled the room with the sound of her imaginary repartee, the repartee she dreamed she had thrown at the doctor.

Somehow or other Anna felt that Matilda was not brave enough to have said all she claimed to have said to the gentleman doctor, but she agreed with her that he deserved that and more. Carl listened to all that, and he too, agreed with her and voiced his sentiments in no uncertain terms.

Matilda, encouraged, went further. She dwelt upon the wrongs inflicted upon the poor in general, and expressed her willingness to "bet" that "they" would never do such a thing to a child of rich parents, and that if they were to attempt to perform that operation at all upon a rich man's child, they would be so careful that nothing like that would ever happen. Matilda went on to say many more things, but nothing she had said that night or that she had ever said found so fertile a place in Carl's little soul as did this idea. He resented the authorities having done such a thing to him because he was poor, and vowed vengeance upon them. He felt a stronger relationship between this world and his mother's world. That's just the way his world was—the fellows who were stronger were always taking advantage of him because he was weaker, he did not bother to consider the advantages he had so often taken of those weaker than he, because he did that for no other reason than that it was done to him. He saw that his mother's world was a struggle world just like his—that there were those

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who ordered her to do and could get her to do, just as she ordered him and could get him to obey; but unlike her, submitting to the evils she railed against, he was developing cunning to fight those of his world.

After supper, he went to bed and Anna insisted that Matilda ought to take a rest that one night, and argued till Matilda yielded.

They seated themselves comfortably near the stove and sat that way for a while, silently.

"The sky in the west looked so beautiful when I left the shop, to-night," began Anna without removing her gaze from the stove lid.

"Yes. Wasn't it beautiful," said Matilda with emotion. "I saw it, I was there."

"At the shop?"

"Yes," said Matilda, smiling. "You have no idea how I longed to see the neighborhood. I was afraid to keep Carl out doors with that awful arm, but I just could not come straight home. I had to go take a look at it. The kids were all streaming out for their airing. you should have seen 'em. They looked to me like a lot of Annas and Carls and Matildas."

"There isn't a thing about that horrid old place that made us happy then," said Anna, "but I don't know, it pains me so to look at it."

"Just what I said to myself," cried Matilda. "Funny, isn't it?"

"But you know, after all, if we want to look at it that way, there were some things about it that were lovely. Do you remember Miss Witell?"

"Oh, yes. The teacher that died?"

"Yes. Poor Miss Witell! I've been thinking of her often lately."

"What makes you think of her so much?"

"I don't know. She was the best woman in the whole place. She walks around in this world of the

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past that I look back to so often like an angel. You know she's like a bit of sunshine there."

"She was lovely, that's what all of us feel. Do you remember how we cried when Superintendent Core talked about her at the funeral? I don't mean the funeral, you know, the time he took us all together into the dining room. Do you remember how you and me cried so, and Carl laughed at us? She was the best woman we ever had there, and Core, the old hypocrite—I say it though he is dead, the old devil—made believe he felt so bad. Do you remember the time he was so mean to her and called her down before all of us and made her cry?"

"Yes, and he did that many other times. He was a mean old devil, I'm glad he is dead."

"It's wrong of us to talk of the old fellow like that," said Matilda, smiling faintly and trying to be reverent, "He's dead and she's dead, I suppose they've settled things between themselves by this time."

As if very much affected by the truth of what she said, Anna shook her head in agreement and obediently dropping the subject of Superintendent Core, returned with a sigh to that of Miss Witell.

"How long is she dead now?"

"I guess it's about fourteen or fifteen years, isn't it? She was a young girl yet, wasn't she?"

"No, she wasn't. She was quite an old maid, she was nearly as old as I am, now."

"Nearly as old as you are now? Heavens, one would think you were an old woman."

"She was on old maid, all right and had about as much out of her life as I have out of mine," sighed Anna.

"We all have a lot out of it," whispered Matilda, then trying to get Anna away from the subject that

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was not good for her, she sighed and said softly, "Nine years now since Carl died."

This last remark angered Anna for a moment. It seemed to her that Matilda had deliberately taken her into a new subject, one that was more interesting to her.

Matilda sensed her feelings, and began to talk about Miss Witell again.

"She may have been an old maid, but she was better off than many a maried woman. You talk of her being an old maid as if that was such a terrible thing. I am not an old maid, what have I gotten out of my life?"

"When I talk about my being an old maid, I don't mean that I feel so bad because I didn't get married. An old maid like she was, is not so bad at all. There was *something* in her life, at least. There's nothing in mine, but you, have a whole lot, Matilda. I'm surprised at you. You have a little fellow. If I had a child, I'd be very happy."

"I love my little Carl. You know I couldn't love him more than I do. But my dear Anna, just let's look at the thing as it is. Really you're better off. You're going to evening school and learning. Look at me sitting here day in day out knitting and knitting, till I see nothing else but dancing needles. I, myself certainly have nothing out of life, and what am I doing for Carl? I used to think I was going to make a wonderful man out of my child. I was going to educate him, but what am I doing? He's having trouble in school, how can I help him and when can I help him? I have all I can do to keep the roof over him and buy another pair of stockings for him, when those he has are worn into yarn. I see him about five minutes a week. How do I know what he's learning, which way his mind is going? But what can I do?

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Tell me what could you do? It's a sin to say so, but really sometimes, I'm just glad that he keeps away from the house. Let him grow up as best he can. I haven't even the patience to be decent to him as a mother should be. When do I see him and when can I enjoy being a mother to him? I tell you, really, I'd have been better off if I had never been a wife or a mother—better off than being what I am. I don't say this because I don't love my baby. What haven't I suffered since that boy's been sick with that arm? I just can't sleep. Just as you see me, always working, and giving him no attention at all, you know, my mind is never free from worrying about him. Every time I leave the house, I have funny feelings about what might happen to him. I almost go crazy waiting for him after three o'clock, when I think he should be home from school. It isn't you see, Anna, that I don't love him. No mother could love her child more, and yet, I tell you I'd feel better just now if he had never been born. I say it, and I mean it, Anna, because I love him."

"Oh, I don't know," said Anna. "I know it's very hard and it is a great responsibility, but Mattie, it gives you something to look forward to. You have something to expect in the years to come. You don't know how terrible it is to expect nothing—absolutely nothing. For a while I had great hopes of what I might do at the evening school, but not only have I learnt the more I go there, what little we can hope to get out of it, but I am so worn out when after a day's hard work I come to the class room, that I can't even get the little they do give us there. I sleep most of my time away there—I haven't the energy to listen. I'm beginning to feel that it won't amount to anything. Sometimes I feel as though the earth were just sinking under me. Everything I ever hoped and

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dreamed about has gone up in smoke. Sometimes it seems to me that there is but one thing left to me—if I could start running somewhere and just run till I dropped perhaps I might get some kind of satisfaction, some kind of relief out of that."

"You know, Anna, dear," began Matilda slowly, trying to hold back the tears and to control the tremor in her voice. "You ought to give up your evening school a while. You ought to go out more. You ought to meet men of your own age. I don't see why a girl of your age shouldn't get married yet?"

Anna laughed. "It's foolish to talk like that, Matilda."

"Why? Why is it foolish? People have married and been happy at a much later time in their lives. You have simply run away from people. Some of your friends even think that you don't treat them right. Look at that fellow that used to come for you when you first went to the evening school. I think he thought a whole lot of you, but really, you actually drove him away from you."

"Believe me, Matilda," said Anna, laughingly, "I'm glad he went."

"Oh, really that's not right. Everybody can't be alike. Every man can't be like Fred was, and you know after all, he wasn't perfect either. Every man has his faults."

"I know," she said, "that men like Fred, so good and beautful as he was, would rather throw up their homes, their professions and everything else, than run the risk of living with a creature like myself. So don't think that I'm waiting for one as good as Fred was. It isn't that. For a long time I used to think that he'd come back some day and sort of lift me out of the hole I have got into. I don't mean exactly, by marrying me, but sort of to put some little light into

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my world, something to make me feel when I get up mornings, that it's one day nearer to something, don't you know. But I've given that up. I'm sure Fred's not living, or we'd hear from him."

The fire had gone low, and they replenished it, huddling close to each other to keep warm, while it burned up. They had turned the gas down to reduce the expense of it, and for fear that Matilda would suggest going to bed, Anna began to talk again after a long silence.

"It may seem funny to you," she began, "but I've got myself to live upon what *was* rather than anything I could hope for. I wish I could always feel as I do sometimes. I seem to live, to get strength from thoughts of those few days I spent with Fred out in the Catskills. The walks he took with me. I can see him walking beside me and talking so earnestly. You know what a beautiful voice he had, so low and soft. Such things as he'd be thinking about and saying! Oh, you don't know what a beautiful boy he was. The thoughts he had. The things he'd say. Sometimes I used to think that he was suffering because he was thinking those things, and I used to try to stop him. I think he didn't like it. Do you think he was angry at me, Matilda, because I told him not to think about such things? One time I can remember, it seemed to me he got angry at me."

"Oh, no," Matilda assured her, "Fred never got angry over such things. He knew you meant it for his own good."

"You know, Matilda, when I get to thinking about it as I do now, I feel myself so much richer than most girls. I just could sometimes live on the things I can remember of him and me. I can see him as if it was but yesterday that we were together out there. I keep those memories in my mind, like rich jewels in a box."

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"They are richer than jewels," said Matilda with a sigh.

"We were just reading Evangeline the other day. We have finished it now. You know, Matilda, I just wished I could become a 'Sister of Mercy,' like her. I'd like to just give up my life to doing good. Here I'm giving my life up to making shirts for Androon."

"You're doing me good, and doing my little boy good, Anna. We need a sister of Mercy."

They sat silently for a while, then Anna began again to dwell in glowing terms on the jewels in her jewel box. She assured Matilda that she would ever be with her and that she would ever be a "sister of Mercy" to little Carl.

"You know what I've been thinking?" said Matilda suddenly, "I think you and I ought to go out to Fred's home some day and find out all about him."

"I really would be afraid to," said Anna, hesitating, "I don't know why, I imagine I'd drop with heart trouble, if I saw them. For all you know they blame me for everything."

"Oh, I think that you just imagine that."

"It would take a lot of money you know."

"That's what bothers me. We'd need about twenty dollars, wouldn't we?"

"We wouldn't dare go with less. I suppose if we saved, by the summer after this one, we could have that much to spare, if things go all right. Oh, how I'd love to see that bridge and that creek. The stone under that bridge where we sat and talked."

She went into details about the bridge and the night they sat there and talked and then cried, "We must go, Matilda."

It was getting very late. It had been a long time since they had aired their feelings in this way. It had all been like looking out upon the sun going down.

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The whole past which they had brought out from the dusty store-house was a glowing sunset. Because of all the darkness about them, it glowed more brilliantly and they went to bed that night, under its beautiful spell, assured of the ability to face the morrow with greater fortitude.

CHAPTER IV.

For six weeks Matilda kept Carl out of school and tried very hard to keep him from going out doors, her latter efforts, however, were far from always being successful. With the plea that in school the boys would pull at his arm in play, even though there was almost no sign of the swelling left, he managed to fill out his second month's absence. Then all his further manoeuvres failed and he was obliged to re-enter Mrs. Bowen's classroom. After two months of idleness, with the rest of his class mates going on in the meantime, Carl, who was never a successful student, was very much out of place, and the head of department decided to put him back again, in spite of Matilda's tearful protests.

Now Carl had very little of *that* young lady teacher's love. She had already had him in her class twice. She knew him entirely too well and was glad to see his seat unoccupied the third morning after he had returned to school. Feeling that the truant officer might scare him so badly as to get him to go back to school again, she kept his name out of the truant officer's book. During the following month Carl showed himself but three times.

Jimmie found playing truant not quite so easy, but Jimmie was willing to take the consequences and and so, together, they had an exciting time of it.

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Three blocks away from where the two youngsters lived, a lady by the name of Mrs. Valey, a childless widow, seeking with might and main to make both ends meet, for no other reason than that though she faithfully believed in a beautiful hereafter, and had great hopes of going there herself, she was extremely worried about going sooner than God wished her to. She kept a dingy little candy store, which her abusive husband inspite of his abusiveness had yet been good enough to bequeath to her, because he couldn't take it along with him.

Jimmie made her acquaintance first. He went in to buy a three-cent boy's book upon which a red and black illustration of burglary was the attraction. Mrs. Valey, though frightfully near-sighted, saw enough of him to be satisfied with his general appearance and admitted him to one of her three rooms back of the store where he could read the thing undisturbed. He read three of them that school day and after reading them gave them back to her to sell to other boys. This was considerably profitable and Mrs. Valey, who figured that she might as well sell them to him since he would buy them anyway, invited him to come again.

At first Jimmie hesitated about "letting Carl in" on this "snap," but an incident occurred which brought Carl into it and intensified that friendship between them that in the last few years had often ebbed and flowed by turns.

It was during the Easter vacation when the presence of boys on the street was not, as at other times, a thing to cause people in general and truant officers in particular to be suspicious, that Carl and Jimmie were making their way into one of the city's busy streets, and came upon a very large department store.

Jimmie made the suggestion and Carl followed

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him. They entered the great store and began to gloat over the thousand and one things that they saw there and craved. They pulled through the large crowd with affected honesty of purpose untill they reached the extensive Easter card counter. There they stopped. A hundred people, men, women, and children were moving about the counter and the sales girls ran about excitedly with cash and orders. Here Jimmie saw a chance and Carl at once emulated him. Before many minutes, both coats were carefully buttoned over blouses filled with Easter cards, and the two little thieves glided out into the street, unnoticed.

When they left Broadway, they felt safe and chuckling gleefully, started for Mrs. Valey's store.

The old lady was seated on a stool back of the counter, hands folded on her lap, when the cow bell above her door rang violently and the two youngsters entered. Jimmie selected one book and Carl another and then Jimmie asked for permission to go to the room in back and read.

Mrs. Valey hesitated a moment but finally consented and the two youngsters started back. The dingy candy store was long and narrow and its walls were lined with shelves packed with candy boxes and heaps of shapeless rubbish. At the extreme end of the store, the end opposite the entrance, a few wooden stairs led up to a narrow and very dark corridor. This corridor too, was lined with shelves, loaded with boxes and rubbish. Passing through the corridor they felt their way into a dark room at the opposite end of which was a window and near it a dilapidated old sofa with numerous rips, patches and hollows. Spreading their books upon this old sofa, they pulled out their cards and with many comments and much chuckling, they sorted them. Then Jimmie tip-toed over to a corner where his sharp eyes had noticed a

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roll of wrapping paper and very carefully, he tore off enough of it to wrap up the cards.

"I'll tell her m'brother lost his job and bought these cards to sell 'em on 'e street," said Jimmie, then paused for a moment as if he were considering a flaw in the next move, then went on, "yes, then he got a job and so gave me these and says, 'Jimmie sell 'em for yourself an' have a treat on me because I got a new job.' How's that, Collie, hey?"

"Dandy" said Collie and the two rolled around on the old sofa till a sound in the corridor told them that old Mrs. Valey was coming to investigate.

In an instant they were back to their open books. When Mrs. Valey appeared they were motionless, deeply engrossed in their stories.

Mrs. Valey was very much pleased by the dim picture of studiousness presented to her defective eyes. She had come for something but had already forgotten what it was and stood there thinking.

"Y'don't want to buy any Christmas cards?" asked Jimmie still engrossed in his story, keeping his eyes on the pages as he spoke with affected sleepiness.

"Christmas cards!" she exclaimed.

"Naw," cried Jimmie, sitting up and stretching as if very tired, "I'm dopy. I mean Easter cards."

She stepped to where they sat, and Jimmie handed her the bundle which she undid and began examining them by bringing one after the other up to her nose.

"Where'd you get them cards?" she demanded when she had examined them.

Jimmie lost his patience, "Y'needn't buy," he cried angrily, "Think I hooked them?"

"I jest ast you that's all," said Mrs. Valey re-examining them.

"M'brother was out sellin' 'em because he lost 'is job. He found a dandy job t'day and gave me

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these t'blow m'self, an' if you don't want to buy 'em, I can sell 'em all right. The man Bill bought 'em off, 'll take 'em back anyway."

"Sure 'e will," added Carl, rising from his fascinating book for his position had become unbearable to him.

"What are *you* buttin' in?" demanded Jimmie in an angry whisper kicking him violently in the shins and sending him back to his reading with a tear oozing out of each eye.

The old lady decided that she "might as well have 'em as some other store as makes much more money than I," and began to bargain with him.

After a dozen or more exclamations of, "oh, what d'y'think," the bargain was closed as follows: Mrs. Valey was to give them five cents worth of candy each, five cents in cash for the moving picture show, was to lead them into the moving picture theatre which allowed no one under sixteen to enter alone, and was to let each of them read any two of the boys' books that they should pick out. The bid had been for more candy, more books and several times going to the picture show; but when the old lady threw the cards angrily on the table and said, "Keep 'em then. I don't know where y'got 'em anyway," and was about to return to the store, Jimmie yelled, "Take 'em then," and the bargain was closed.

Everything went well till Mrs. Valey who had shut her store and was already near the moving picture theatre from which she was to return as soon as the youngsters were legitimately seated, discovered the fact that her entrance would take another nickle and strenuously rebelled.

"The hull thing ain't worth it, an' y'can take the cards an' go," she cried.

However when Jimmie who had already eaten

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some of the candy affected a willingness to take "the hull thing an' go," she agreed to compromise. There was still more than five cents worth of candy left between them and gathering about two cents worth each, they deposited their donations on her dirty hand. Shoving the hand full of candy under the shawl she had about her, the procession moved on to the theatre where the two boys were glad to get rid of her.

The piano rattled on through a medley of all the street songs of the day and culminated in a horrible rendition of poor Mendelsohn's Wedding March: just as the endless shooting of Indians, horses and riders dashing over rock and road and precipice, ended in the wedding of the hero and heroine, the former the best shooter of Indians, the latter a captured Indian maid.

Carl's little soul was fired. Of all the things in his existence this was certainly the greatest. He lived through the harrowing experiences with the actors on the screen and felt a satisfaction in his craving little soul that he had never felt before. It was supreme, and he applauded and danced about in his seat till Jimmie at his right and a woman sitting behind him poked and prodded him into better behavior. Whatever other effects that first afternoon in the moving picture theatre might have had upon him, the strongest was a determination to go there often no matter what he would have to be called upon to do to earn his admission. He thought of many plans between pictures, as he sat there, and decided to ask his mother to allow him to go to work. He figured out that if he could go to the moving picture theatre every night, he could be perfectly willing to work all day. Of course he knew that if he told his mother why he wanted to work she would never give her consent and so thought of every imaginable reason

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which he could offer her for wanting to leave school —at any rate he felt sure that with the proper amount of nagging he would win his point in time.

Mrs. Valey having already sold some of the Easter cards when they returned was amiably disposed towards the little sinners and after a little quibbling gave them a cents worth of candy each and permission to go to their "reading room" with a couple of the new books.

Jimmie selected his book and started back when he noticed Carl's disinclination to follow him.

"What's goin' through you?" demanded Jimmie, "What's y'r rush?"

"I got to go home. It's late now isn't it?"

"Aw, go on. It's not late yet," argued Jimmie, "We can read a book yet."

But Carl had an idea and would not be moved. In disgust Jimmie went back into the dark passageway, and Carl went out. He walked off slowly for a while and then, certain of security from Jimmie's possible seeing him, he began to run and ran till he came to the butcher shop of Jimmie's uncle.

Jim Daniels had already pulled down the window shades and had seated himself behind his high perched cash drawer with a pencil between his thick, battered fingers to see where his establishment was taking him to.

"The store is closed," he cried with a show of impatience at sound of some one entering, then muttered to himself, "All my damned customers do is give me a show to work."

Carl had had wonderful dreams concerning the job he was to get and the salary it was surely going to give him, while on his hurried way to the meat market, but everything seemed so hopeless and impossible when he stood before the cramped Mr. Dan-

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iels, absorbed in his bloodstained day book. The shop was dark and smelled bad, and Carl would gladly have retreated without his job, but he was now afraid to do that.

"I—I came to ast' y'u if you would give me a job," he said.

"Go on home," said Jim good-humoredly, "you see I have no more jobs to-night."

"I don't want one of those jobs," argued Carl, now considerably emboldened by the good humor he sensed in the big, dirty man's voice.

"Well, what kind of job do y'want?" demanded Mr. Daniels, smiling.

"I want an all day job. I—I want to leave school and work all day."

"Aw, y'don't want to do that, you little fool," said the big butcher peculiarly interested, "I wish I hadn't left school. I had to leave it an' now see how hard it is for me to make a livin'. If I had gone to school, I'd be a rich man now. I'd be home with m'family reading or something, instead of sitting here after a hard day's work breaking m'head over a lot of figures. You go to school, m'boy."

"Can you give me a job, workin' after school?"

"Well, now I ain't got no more time. If your mother will come here sayin' she wants you to work after school, maybe I'll give you a job."

Carl thanked the man with all his heart, although he said no more than, "Thank you, Mister," and went out and when on the street, congratulated himself for having withstood the impulse to run when the butcher first began to talk.

When he arrived home, Anna was already there eating her supper. Matilda sat at one end of the table, apparently unable to eat. She was knitting some more of her moccasins and tears were stream-

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ing down her cheeks. Carl had a premonition that that crying had been because of him and was anxious to blurt out his good luck in the hope of appeasing her. He knew that conditions at home were far from good. He had heard Matilda say many times that it was getting harder for her to knit every day and he had an idea that she would be extremely glad to hear about his job, but he didn't know just how to begin. As soon as he entered, she stopped knitting and began to stare at him.

He realized that he had done wrong and instead of going to the table to partake of his share of the supper, he nervously took a seat on the wood and coal box near the stove, wincing under her gaze and Anna's ominous silence.

"If she'd only ast me where I was," he said to himself, "instead of stare like that at me."

"Where have you been all day long?" Matilda finally demanded.

"Lookin' f'r a job after school," he shot back at her with the feeling that that was going to completely vanquish her. Nor did he look up to see the effect it was going to have. Dropping his head into his hand, resting his elbows on his knees, like a man deeply worried with the struggle for existence, he sat there awaiting the next thunderous demand or condemnation.

"So you were so busy looking for a job all day that you couldn't find time to come in for your lunch?" Matilda continued her interrogation in a very much softer tone of voice.

"It takes more'n a whole day to find a job sometimes."

"Well, what did you find?"

"I found a job, but you'll have to go and say to the man that you want me to work after school," said

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Carl indifferently, as if he were not in the mood to plead with her.

Matilda was ready to cry all over again. She looked at Anna who was smiling, and smiling herself, said, "Well, come an' have something to eat now. We'll talk about that later."

Carl was very hungry. Congratulating himself on having so remarkably managed the situation he went to the table rather sheepishly, but still in the manner of a conqueror and ate heartily whatever Matilda put before him; and she put before him what she could find or spare anxious to have the little man eat all he could, for he looked so worn and weary.

When Carl was through with his supper, Matilda wanted to know what kind of job he had found and Carl, feeling much more at ease, went into detail as to what it was going to be, supplying with his imagination those facts about which Matilda required information, and idealizing all of them.

To his consternation, her objections were very strong and most unreasonable. Poor Matilda! She had given up all hope of making a big man of Carl, but the hopes that she still had, had created a certain atmosphere in her mind that found the idea of Carl's butcher boy, most incompatible, and she denied him the privilege of accepting the job, in spite of all his crying and in spite of all his able arguments.

When he saw that it was useless to argue with her, he determined to go to Mr. Daniels next day and tell him that his mother didn't want him to work regularly, but that he could do as many jobs as he had time for, and that she could under no circumstance go to see him, because she was a widow and had to work hard herself. With this one hope and the determination to get to the moving-picture shows with Jimmie, he went to bed.

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CHAPTER V.

Jim Daniels seemed to have completely changed, metamorphosed, over night. Carl did not know what to make of him. He had approached the butcher quite early next morning as they had agreed he should; but Jim would not even talk to him. There were a few people in the store and Carl attributed the incomprehensible mood of the butcher to the presence of a neatly dressed young man with a small satchel in his hand. Jim's ill temper was exasperating. The first time Carl spoke to him the butcher went on working without noticing him. After the second attempt to get his attention Jim commanded him in no soft voice, to refrain from bothering him. The third time Carl spoke to him, having patiently waited almost an hour, he received a flying piece of fat squarely on the head, and, hurling back what vituperation he could think of at the moment, Carl darted out and away.

Many times over and over, as he made his way back home, there flashed across his little brain the unanswerable question, "But he told me to come, why did he do that, damn butcher?" He imagined himself "getting even." He saw himself locate and pick up a huge stone, and imagined hearing the musical crash of the glass and seeing the enraged butcher go into a fit of anger and attempt to run after him.

When he returned to the tenement Jimmie was nowhere in sight. There were other youngsters playing in the yard, some of whom had come into the world long after that unforgetable day, when Jimmie struck him full in the face with the stick with which he had been stirring his mud-pies. Carl looked at them all playing there as he used to do, and for the space

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of a moment there was lit up in his mind by the dim recollections of that incident and others similar to it, a touch of bitterness towards his little friend; but that soon dissipated and was followel by a great desire to see Jimmie. Among the excited and noisy youngsters he saw Jimmie's sister and inquired of her for Jimmie's whereabouts.

"In the house," shouted the dirty little youngster and dashed off playing noisily with the rest of the group.

Carl looked into his own house, saw his mother at work and, fearing that she would call him, if she saw him, and ask him to do something for her, he glided back into the yard and up the stairs of the rear tenement. He climbed up cautiously and arriving at the door way of Jimmie's dark and dingy home, he heard his friend wailing, as he was engaged in an argument with his mother who as a punishment, refused to let him out. Jimmie's voice seemed to come from the front room and Carl stole up to the front room door hoping to get his friend's attention. He had no sooner got there, when his operations were halted by a woman's threatening shriek, "What do you want?"

Jimmie's mother was standing on the threshold of the kitchen door and had a broom in her hand. Carl could not leave the hallway without passing her. Screwing up his face into an expression of fear and doubt, he stood there watching her nervously.

"What do you want?" she demanded again, and getting no reply to this second demand, shouted, "Get out of here you little loafer."

Carl made his way slowly and carefully to the head of the stairs his eyes riveted upon her, and when he got there he made one jump for the sticky banister and slid down with great speed.

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Passing through the hallway again Matilda espied him and ran out and called him in. With a frown on his face he shuffled his way into the kitchen and reluctantly accepted the job of holding the skein as his mother wound it into a ball. That done he began to look about for something more interesting, but no matter what it was he wished to do his mother objected. Finally, in desperation he made an attempt to run out again, but Matilda threw down her work and running after him, collared him and brought him back. He threw himself upon his little bed and cried and grumbled till he got tired and then quietly gave himself up to meditation.

His exasperation was beyond utterance when after lunch she still refused to let him out. He told himself that he hated her. He stamped his foot and yelled; but all to no purpose.

At about three o'clock in the afternoon he heard some one rush through the hallway and it occurred to him that that was Jimmie making his escape. Stealthily Carl made his way into the front room without his mother's notice, and looking out of the front room window, saw Jimmie in the distance looking back as if he were expecting his mother after him.

Opening the window wider, he carefully made his way out, painfully twisting his right arm in letting himself down, and before very long was at Jimmie's side and the two turned the corner and fled. They were delighted with the fact that they had got the best of their mothers and congratulated each other on the manner of escape, chuckling hilariously as they started in quest of adventure.

Neither of them had a single penny, but that did not prevent them from covetously gazing in upon the candy exhibition of every candy store on the trail, nor

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from watching enviously the people that entered moving picture theatres, nor from reading and carefully examining and comparing every theatre bill-board they came upon.

There were so many candy stores. There were so many peanut and banana venders. Every wareman so exhibiting his wares as to create the strongest desire in those that saw them; yet no one offered a way of getting any of those things. Oh, how they craved them! They walked with their eyes down, searching the gutters, turning things over with the hope of finding something underneath, looking into windows and wishing that something might suddenly break them, dreaming of getting some of the things they saw, but merely swallowing their own saliva. They would gladly have stolen, but no opportunity presented itself —everything was carefully guarded. One time Carl found a single peanut and Jimmie announced at once that he was entitled to half of it, and watched his pal divide it to make sure that he got his full half. Later on they found a fraction of a banana with the whole of its pealing. They divided their find each taking two of the four strips of pealing and half of the small piece of banana.

They were still biting away at the white of the last strip of pealing when they fell into a hostile gang who would have "murdered" them had not their tired legs served them so well.

When they reached the safety of their own territory they discussed the situation with great bitterness, planning the gathering of their own gang and a surprise attack upon the enemy.

The days were growing longer and that particular afternoon had been warm and peaceful, and the evening was delightful. Supper time came but in spite of the desire for food both of them feared returning

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home and decided to remain out and postpone their expected punishments. They came upon the little park of their neighborhood, a square patch of trees and benches in the midst of blocks of tenements, and sat down to rest and to hurl the common-place humor of the street, which they learned and used in parrot-like fashion, upon those passing who for some reason or other merited their interest.

Evening came down with all the sweetness of spring evenings and drew from out the surrounding tenements a goodly number of the young of the congested tenants, who, by twos, in groups, and singly paraded the spacious walks and made the wretched district merry with their laughter.

Of those that passed the two boys, some sneered at their advances, some laughed at their boyishness, and others were totally indifferent to anything they said, whether it was, "You dropped something," "Your hat's fallin' off," "Hello," or a very emotional, "Well, what do you think of that, look who's here."

They were just beginning to tire of this game and the coldness of the evening was just beginning to make them think of home, when two little girls of about their own age, passed them.

"Why, how do you do?" cried Jimmie, with much politeness.

"Go on you," said the prettiest of the two, very much offended. But the other one hanging on to her arm, giggled almost approvingly.

Jimmie tugged Carl's coat sleeve and both of them instantly rose and followed the two young ladies.

"Where shall we go to?" asked Jimmie most amiably as they brushed into the two indignant young ladies.

"Aw go on," said the prettier one with another

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frown, to the other's delight, and turning about they walked away.

Jimmie was not so easily discouraged. "Oh, this is the way you want to go?" he said with great seriousness and began to follow.

"Ain't he clever," said the hardest giggler of the two, and there upon began to giggle.

"You bet he's clever," replied Jimmie and having found the one most disposed to make friends, he walked right up to her and continued his show of cleverness to their enduring admiration. And so it was that Carl having nothing else to do, rather bashfully took the other side, next to the prettiest one and the younger of the two.

In that way they walked from one end of the park to the other and all around for fully an hour before Jimmie had said enough clever things and got enough of their admiration for them to become intimate enough to seat themselves on a bench and playfully shove into each other.

Whatever disappointments the day might have had, and whatever horrors they might have anticipated upon reaching home, nothing was too dear a price to pay for what pleasure the evening gave them and for the hopeful world the incident opened up to them.

Their foolish mothers, willing to spend the life God had given them in knitting baby moccasins and in cleaning dirty rooms, would have been horrified had they come upon the quartette on their way home, arm in arm. Not only were the two ragged boys unconcerned about any wrong in what they were doing; but without consciously considering it so, perhaps, they felt instinctively that that was the first answer to the eternal longing within them and they reached their own bedsides, laughing at the licking one received

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and the scolding the other was given, considering them the most puny prices they could have been made to pay for so rich a boon. Nor could anything that either Matilda or Jimmie's mother threatened to do, cause them to as much as hesitate to keep the engagements they had determined and decided upon.

Never before in all his life had Carl as much loveliness to dwell upon. They were only little tenement girls whose mothers lived near each other. The clothes they wore were cheap and made to last a long while, but in Carl's agitated mind about to go off in sleep the plaid colors of Minnie's dress, the soft brown braid hanging down her back, the touch of that braid which an accident had given him, the touch of her arm, the smile on her pretty little face, and the hope inspiring beauty of the spring evening atmosphere—these deep-carved impressions built him a new world; and he went off into dreamland, the happiest boy on earth; and when his mother, on her way to bed, late that night, passed him as he lay with his face dug into his pillow, his dirty ragged clothes in an untidy heap on the floor, had she known of the extent of that happiness, she would not have wept, looking at him.

CHAPTER VI.

What a life Carl and Jimmie led after that park meeting. The several worlds in which they lived demanded all the attention they could give and they divided that attention between them as necessity and desire forced them to. In the home world they received very little. Outside of the food and clothes and shelter, which was given them, life at home was but a matter of evasion. The better they learned to evade those who ruled there, the better they got along

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in the other worlds in which they either struggled or drank to the satisfaction of their desires as deeply as their means allowed. Worse than home was the school, where evasion, though quite possible was considerably harder. The gang and its confines constituted another world. There they fought, obeyed, or ruled. There they planned and executed attacks on hostile gangs, and went swimming in the river.

The world in which Minnie and Agnes figured was different from their other worlds—as much as joy and the inspiration to do, can possibly be different from toil and struggle and hunger.

About them, their environment was rich in the things they desired and craved. Wherever they went that riches radiated and the radiation ignited fires in their little souls. The fires burned and the resultant energy drove them—drove them irrespective of walls, irrespective of the abstractions and dead notions of those whom they did not like—drove them to hunt for rubber and brass and copper, anything that they could sell to the ugly old junk dealer, plying his trade a few blocks' distance from where they lived. When after a while, hunt as they did there was nothing saleable found, and the fires still burned and the energy drove them as relentlessly, they *stole* rubber and brass and copper till none was left in sight anywhere to steal. Then Jimmie found his way to his mother's pocket book.

"I ain't goin' to treat all the time," said Jimmie, angrily as he and Carl were walking home late one Friday night after having taken the girls from the moving picture theatre to Mrs. Valey's candy store and from there to their homes, "Gee but you're one dandy, letin' me pay all the time."

"I can't get any," said Carl conscious of having done a very clever thing.

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"Get it as I get it, why don't y'u?"

"How do you get it?"

"Don't y'r mother give y'u no money at all?"

"She ain't got any t'give, I guess."

"Oh, yes she has. She's got more'n my mother. She's janitor and look how she's workin' all the time, besides."

"Yes," said Carl almost proud of what Jimmie had said, "but she won't give me none."

"Why don't y'u take it yourself, then?" demanded Jimmie. "By rights she ought to give it t'y'u, an' if she don't why don't y'u take it y'rself? Y'know where she keeps it, don't y'u?"

Carl was silent, Jimmie had intimated his feelings in this matter before, and he had himself, thought of locating his mother's pocket book, but not only had he been afraid to try it, but he hated to. He saw in his mind the image of his mother stooped over her knitting trying to gather the few pennies he wanted to rob from her. He remembered too her constant complaints of having to work so hard and of getting so little for it. But that day Jimmie had taken more than even he himself thought that he should have taken and was walking home with a heavy heart, heavy with expectation. He persisted and there ended the whole argument threatening to refuse to pay for all of them any more, adding that if Carl didn't get the money there would be no more soda drinking and no more going to the moving picture shows, as he would not get any more money for a while.

With a heavy heart, Carl entered his mother's kitchen. Matilda sat waiting for him. She demanded that he remain in the kitchen and listen to her, but Carl had reached that age of boyhood when weak mothers are afraid to use corporal punishment and make their demands in words alone. Of course, Carl

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left the kitchen at once and proceeded to get into bed. Matilda followed him to the doorway and stopped there, pouring out her heart to him. He learned that she knew that he had played truant all of that week, that the truant officer had called to see her about him and had threatened to arrest him and send him away to a truant school, that he was keeping bad company, that he would never amount to anything unless he did what she was going to make it her business to see thereafter that he did; and that if she couldn't do all that herself, the truant officer and the police force and the reform school were going to help her make a good boy of him.

He lay there motionless as she scolded and feigned to be unmoved by what she had been saying; but within he was very much worried about the truant officer, the police, and the reform school, and was quite disposed to go to school after that, for a time, though he did not exactly know how he was going to tell her that he was.

Matilda continued her scolding till she grew weary of doing so then went off to bed to cry and to scold herself as she had scolded him for having neglected her child so long.

When the light was put out, Carl began to think very seriously about the truant officer and the police but, after a long deliberation in which he considered everything he had ever thought about his mother, and everything she had ever threatened but failed to carry out, he concluded that she would never allow either the truant officer or the police to take him away. He decided, however, to attend school quite regularly for a while, till, "they kind o' forgit," about him. It had taken him a long time to reach that somewhat shaky conclusion and the thinking it necessitated, had so excited his mind that he couldn't sleep, besides he hadn't

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for a moment forgotten Jimmie's threat, and his own desire to play big in Minnie's eyes. Jimmie's advice as to a way out, worried him, and he lay a long time turning from side to side trying not to hear the sounds the sleepers were making in the next room.

He thought of Minnie. Her pretty little face and the fascinating manner in which that face smiled, her soft curled hair, the colors of the plaid dress she wore, the perfume she had got somewhere and somehow, the graceful manner she had in moving about, the clever things she said, in short, all of Minnie pervaded his mind, was the source and goal of his hopes and dreams and the goad that was driving him to crime.

He turned from side to side many times. Minnie would not leave him. Her smile, her entire graceful make up beckoned him. He compared her to his mother—his mother with her everlasting black clothes, her graceless moving about the room, the never changing complaining frown on her face, the shuffle of her lifeless feet, the stoop in her shoulders, the work worn unclean hands, and her unbearable scolding; and his mind was aflame with the desire for Minnie.

Several times he tried to act. He would sit up on his cot and listen and then lie down again. He was afraid. The clock was ticking fast towards morning, and Jimmie's threat sounded loud in the dreadful silence. Horrified at what he was about to do, at what he had now decided he must do, his heart aching with the rapidity of its beating, he slid down, cautiously felt his way to the closet where the dishes were kept, located the pocketbook without making a sound, took from it what he felt to be a quarter, replaced the pocketbook with shaking hand, returned to his bedside, deposited the quarter in one of his shoes, stretched out on his cot exhausted, and

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burried his burning forehead in his burning arm. He figured out how long his mother worked to earn a quarter. He imagined he could see her crying bitterly because she had discovered the theft. He imagined that she was sitting in the next room still knitting. He saw the frown on her face and the tears dropping upon her work. He felt so different towards her now. He was sorry for her. He was sorry for her dirty fingers and lamented their work worn appearance. He was sorry for her stoop, and told himself that her working for him had given it to her. Why did he feel so different towards her? His heart was just breaking. He heard her sigh as she sighed so often at her work and he sighed with her. He even cried. Cried because of the enormity of his crime, and because he felt that he should not have done that to her, who worked so hard and so long, and who never spent a cent for her own pleasure. He was nearly thirteen years old. He could reason and he saw that it was not fair, and regretted it; but he did not replace the coin. He lay thinking that he ought to replace it, till, towards morning, he fell asleep.

It was not necessary for him to feign illness, next morning. He was worn out for lack of sleep and rent by the mental agitation he had suffered. The day seemed no happier than he was. He woke when Matilda was making coffee for Anna, and the flash that returned his consciousness brought with it the great dread with which he had fallen asleep, and, in spite of his consuming passion for Minnie, he regretted having taken that quarter. Fears that had kept away the night before, now came in hordes and he grew sick with worry. In his agony he groaned. Matilda heard the groan and stole up to his bedside to look down at him. This act of kindness and consideration

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overwhelmed him, and he thought of her again as he had thought of her after having taken the quarter—he loved her—he regretted ever having disliked her, was sorry for her and wished ardently that he had not taken the money.

He groaned again, and Matilda came to his bedside again and with a tremor in her voice, as if he had never done anything wrong to her, she asked, "What's the matter?"

He whimpered that he was sick, that his head ached. Matilda put her work-worn hand upon his forehead and held it there a minute.

He felt ill at ease. That hand had struck him many times, and that voice had scolded him till he could not longer endure it; but he told himself that he was wrong, that he had wronged her and angered her, and he wished again and again that he had not taken the quarter.

Anna dressed and partook of the scanty breakfast and Carl heard his mother tell her that she was very much worried about him. Anna advised her to keep him home all day, since it was raining, and to see that he rested, and Matilda agreeing with Anna asked her to step into the principal's office at noon and to tell him that she kept Carl home because he was ill.

Most of the morning Carl sat near the window gazing out into the yard where the falling drops struck the red bricks and rebounded gracefully. His mother gazed at him every now and them and he gazed back at her furtively. She had been overwhelmingly nice to him at breakfast and tried in every possible way to make him feel good, and he wondered what she would say to him, should she discover the loss of the quarter. It appeared to him, as he considered it, that he had done a most foolish thing by playing sick. "If she finds that she has lost the quarter," he thought, "she

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will think at once it was me who took it, and she'll think I feel sick because I'm afraid I did it."

If he had been playing sick all morning, by the time noon arrived he had worried himself into being actually sick and one time, when he went from one room to the other he staggered as if he was about to fall, and Matilda worried herself to a point where it was impossible for her to go on with her work.

She put her work aside and, rising, asked him what he'd like to eat for lunch. He didn't know what he wanted so she herself decided upon what to get and agitated him frightfully by going to the dish closet for her pocketbook.

She left the house telling him she would be back in a few minutes, and he sat there trying to decide how best to face her when she returned.

He had watched her making the moccasins and saw that in her morning work she had just earned a quarter and he was ashamed of his theft.

When he heard her coming down the hallway, he threw his head upon his folded arms, hoping to excite her pity.

With her umbrella dripping, she entered the kitchen and without saying a word went about preparing his lunch for him. He raised his head to gauge by the expression on her face the extent of her ill-will, if she had any. "How do you feel now?" she asked, seeing him raise his head.

Carl told her mumblingly, that he felt better and he was right. Matilda brought the good things she had bought for him and served him with as much pleasure as if he had been a most welcome visitor. But Carl's appetite was not so very good. In fact, it was very hard for him to eat at all, and he wished that something might happen to take Matilda's attention off of him. Hardly had he finished thinking that

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wish, when the door opened and Anna, looking pale, her clothes saturated, came in with a smile on her face and sat down on a chair near the door as if the news she bore had exhausted her. Matilda looked at her inquiringly, and, looking back at Matilda, Anna shook her head and said, "It's come."

"The strike!" said Matilda.

Anna shook her head affirmatively.

Matilda rushed over to her accustomed seat as if she felt the need of beginning her knitting at once, and said assuringly, "It may not last very long."

"They all say it's going to be a bitter fight. They are afraid it's going to last a very long time. That's why some of us were not so anxious to vote for a strike. It's all right to fight for more, but when you got nothing to fight with, it's a different story. I felt terrible. I guess I was the last one to go out to-day, and you know, Androon was so excited, he was the first one at the shop this morning. He and Donald came up to a bunch of us and said he depended on us and would take care of us, and all that. You ought to see how fat he got."

Matilda began to knit again rapidly and told Anna to go make herself something warm to drink. She, however, didn't move; she sat in her dripping clothes and stared upon the floor.

"Let me go to work," exclaimed Carl, breaking in upon the silence.

Matilda looked up with an expression of great satisfaction.

"Well," she said, "there's no need of it yet, but if this thing lasts long, you may have to go to work."

"There's one thing that makes the thing look better," said Anna after she had duly smiled at Carl's expressed desire to help, "the leaders of the Union have interested some very big men in this strike.

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There's a professor from Columbia going to talk to us to-night. They say he's a fine man and will do a whole lot for us. I really don't think, though, that we will win anything by this strike at all. I don't know how the other manufacturers will act, but I know that Androon will get out of it somehow."

Anna went after some dry clothes and came back to the room next to the kitchen, Carl's room, and there began to replace her wet clothes, continuing the discussion of the strike as she did so.

All day they talked about it, and several times Carl remade his offer to go to work, each time more earnestly. The lunch seemed to have made him feel very much better. The excitement of the strike which was to give him an opportunity to leave school so agitated him he could not sit still.

Later in the afternoon, he pleaded the need of fresh air, and, promising to come home early, went for a walk. The turn of affairs made him feel very happy and he was possessed by a great desire to see Jimmie. He hunted for him all over the neighborhood without finding him. Suddenly it dawned on him that Jimmie might be reading books at Mrs. Valey's candy store, and there he found him.

Carl seated himself on the sofa near Jimmie and began to tell him with great excitement all about the strike and what it would mean to him, but Jimmie went right on reading, paying no attention whatever to him.

Carl stopped talking and sat there silently for awhile, then, rising, much offended, threatened to go.

"I ain't goin' to sit here and look at you all day."

"Wait a minute," said Jimmie, "two more pages."

Carl waited and Jimmie read very rapidly. Finally finishing the last two pages, he threw the book

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upon the floor and began stretching like a kitten that had been asleep.

The first thing Jimmie wanted to know was whether he had any "dough" and, as if he had not expected him to have any, when told that he had a quarter, Jimmie's delight was boundless. He slapped his younger companion on the back and praised and congratulated him upon his success.

"Let's spend five of it now and get some candy," he suggested.

"Oh, naw," pleaded Carl, who had had a good lunch. "We want to have enough when they'll be with us to-night."

"Aw, we'll have enough," cried Jimmie, his eyes staring out of his hungry-looking head with desire, "four sodas is twelve cents, and two cents each is twenty cents, and we still have five cents. You ain't goin' to no picture show, to-night."

"I know, but we want to have lots of stuff to-night. Let's wait till to-night an' have a good time."

"Y'can have a good time on twenty cents can't y'u?"

"Not so good as on twenty-five cents, can y'u?"

Jimmie got "mad" and, calling him names and raving with anger, succeeded in moving the obdurate Carl with a final proposition. "Get one or two cents' worth of the lastin' balls, then. Three f'r a cent."

Poor Jimmie had had very little to eat that day and his craving was intense.

Old lady Valey handed them each three of the "lastin' balls" and, with an expression of surprise at the sight of the quarter, remarked, "You're a stingy fellow—havin' so much money, an' spendin' so little."

This unexpected confirmation of his opinion nearly took Jimmie off his feet with excitement, and he went

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on railing at his friend till poor Carl submitted again and spent the other three cents.

"Where y'goin' t'spend the rest of it?" asked Mrs. Valey.

"Right here," said Carl, "to-night. Only, say, you'll let us go back to the other room, won't y'u?"

"We don't like to sit here and have soda and candy with the goils," put in Jimmie and Carl finished for him, "an' all the fellez lookin' in at us."

"If y' b'have y'rselves, y'can."

"We'll b'have ourselves ,you'll see," both assured her at the same time and with great vehemence.

After supper, as usual, both boys sneaked out of their homes and met on a corner from where they went to find the girls. When the quartette reached Mrs. Valey's candy store, she repeated the injunction to "b'have y'reselves" and then permitted them to go to the "reading room," carrying each their own soda and candy.

Carl sat next to Minnie at the table, playing such tricks, doing such things as would bring him, with apparent lack of deliberation, nearest to her, and in just those tricks and in just those acts Minnie encouraged him. She at thirteen was older than he, and everything in their ill-made environment had prematurely forced their desires out and had made them older than they were.

It was after ten o'clock when Carl reached home and faced Matilda's angry interrogations. He managed to think of some semi-satisfactory answer to each angry query and went to bed listening to more threats, while she continued her knitting late into the night, waiting for Anna.

It was near twelve o'clock when Anna came home. She was greatly excited and almost very happy. The Columbia professor was the nicest old man she had

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ever seen, though he wasn't so very old, and had said the nicest things she had ever heard, but above all, he was so nice to her. She had come to the hall early and had spoken to him before and after the address.

Matilda, who had already begun to prepare the beds, stopped every few minutes and commented, "Isn't that lovely."

"You should have been there and heard what he said," went on Anna. "The girls all, and the men too, were ready to stay out all year and fight to the end."

"What's his name?" asked Matilda.

"I don't remember what it was," replied Anna, going toward her coat which she had hung on a chair. "It's a funny name, I just called him Professor."

She found the little circular announcing the lecture, the next meeting at which he was scheduled to speak and spelled the name, "G-u-a-n-o."

"Goono, Goono," said Matilda, trying hard to recall where she had heard the name before, and turning to offer Anna an idea that had just come to her, she saw a significant smile on Anna's face and knew that Anna had herself made the discovery.

"You sure that's him?" asked Matilda, later.

"I'm pretty sure," said Anna, a queer feeling having come over her and showing in the expression of her face. "I'll speak to him about it next time."

They went to bed, but as soon as the light had been extinguished Anna began to wish that they had not gone to bed yet. On the other hand she had herself discouraged conversation on the subject with Matilda because she couldn't bear some of the things Matilda had to say in her attempts to say that which she thought would please Anna most.

She tossed about in a mental fever. At one time things appeared very hopeful and she could hardly wait for the morrow when she would hurry to the

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professor's office to question him concerning Fred. She remembered now that they had been great friends and was sure that if anybody heard from *him* Professor Guano surely must be the one. "The Professor must know where he is," she told herself. "I will find out from him to-morrow and write. Yes, I will write, I don't care. There's nothing wrong in my writing. I will write and tell him that I just want to hear from him, that I don't intend to hang on to his neck, that he can feel perfectly free, that I have fallen into the bottomless pit of darkness and just his friendship alone will give me some light." The last thought brought the tears to her eyes and for a few minutes she just sobbed, her mouth pressed down upon her pillow. She recollected the sensation of the last night, the night he was with her and her heart went out in longing. What wouldn't she have given for but one repetition of that night. She would have died willingly after that. "But no," she went on telling herself, as if she feared that the thoughts she thought were reaching him, "I must not expect that much from him, I must tell him that if he is married, he need not worry about how I feel about him. I must tell him that he must feel free. I only want his friendship."

Then suddenly as a light is blown out came the thought, "suppose he is dead?" After that for a while, all her thoughts were tinged with death and she was afraid of the night, afraid of the darkness and every sound she heard, afraid of her own thoughts which she had no more control over. She struggled for endless minutes to force that shadowy thought of death from all her other thoughts. She struggled for an hour or two hours or it might have been weeks or months, the hours were so long.

When morning came she was exhausted. She jumped from her bed and dressed as soon as it was

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light and went to making coffee. She felt a great need of coffee. After she had had one cup, she felt better, though her eyes seemed but partially open and she felt as if she were walking about half asleep. To her fears she was now indifferent. If he had been so afraid to show signs of himself, she didn't care whether she ever heard from him or not. In fact she felt the silence and the unknown to be a sort of protection against the wounds that a reopening of their friendship might inflict. She would live her life and show that there was something in her, or else, if her life was to be a wasted flash, it were better to die out of it with the noiselessness appropriate to a worthless existence, better by far to die without ever hearing from him.

So Anna did not go to see Professor Guano that day.

The strike wore on and became very bitter. Some of Anna's friends went out on the picket line. Some of them were clubbed and sent to jail. The bitterness towards those who ruled occupied her thinking time and stimulated all the discussions with Maltida. Discussions often held in Carl's hearing and with the youngster's funny interjections.

One day Anna went out on the picket line. One of the girls she knew was marching into the shop escorted by a special policeman.

"Olive," cried Anna rushing towards her, "are you a scab?"

The policeman struck Anna upon the shoulder. A riot ensued and Anna just barely escaped arrest. A reinforcement of pickets arrived in time to engulf her before the policeman could get her.

When things cleared a bit Anna began to feel a pain in her shoulder and her bitterness of feeling grew intenser as the pain became more intense, and

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she wanted to rush right back at the policeman, whom she saw again when the crowd had been dispersed. Friends sensed her mental state and first advised and then persuaded her to go home, where Matilda consoled her a bit. When later in the day an evening newspaper informed her that Professor Guano had taken an active interest in the fight and that he was down at the police station fighting the battles of the arrested pickets, she became excitedly happy.

The strike dragged on. Professor Guano's vacation came along and, feeling that the fight was hopeless and beyond his means, he went off to the country. Anna had put off going to see him from day to day till he was gone, then she regretted having been afraid to go and began to look forward with great anxiety to his return. She began to tell herself that she had been feeling ridiculously small about the whole matter, that she should have inquired and should the professor have known Fred's whereabouts she would have been and ought to have been in communication with him.

For weeks and weeks the dire effects of intensest want ravaged the vitality of the strikers. It had been a very brave fight, but not a fair one. They had fought alone and had had nothing to live on while they had been fighting, while their enemies had paid others to fight for them and had suffered no want whatever. The manufacturers had staked but a part of their capital without which they still lived in comfort. The strikers had staked everything in their possession. They ate less and next to nothing, had gone without the usual new clothes for summer, and had fought on the picket line, coming out of the fight with bodily marks of battle.

But when November came upon them with the early arrival of snow and numerous portents of a severe winter, their spirits gave way and broke. On the first

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Monday of the month, when the rebels, awoke and found the city white with winter, their puny accounts depleted, there was a great rush back to the shops; and, by the end of that week, though the early snows had already disappeared, all the shops in the city were again in full swing as if nothing had happened.

The leaders in the fight, those whose activity had been of greatest value to the strikers, had been discharged and black-listed.

One day not long after, Anna was seated at her machine working very hard and thinking rapidly, it occurred to her that she had been foolish in not having gone to see the professor before he forgot all about her, and she decided to take off an afternoon that week and go to see him.

At noon she was informed by one of her shop mates that the professor had been asked to resign his position at Columbia because of his activity in the strike, and she decided to go to see him at once. She asked her friend to tell the foreman, should he inquire, that she had suddenly been taken sick and had gone home, then started for the college.

Anna felt as if she were committing a great crime and glided through the streets with her head down, afraid to look at those who passed her and worried lest they see her. Wherever she turned to look it seemed to her she saw Donald or Androon or the policeman that had struck her. Nor did she feel any better when she opened the door of Professor Guano's office and saw the group of people already there waiting for him.

For a full hour she sat on a hard bench waiting and regretting her being there. Her cheeks burned. Her head ached and every time she thought of what she was going to say to the Professor and what he might answer, her heart beat so fast it sickened her.

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But she was spared the necessity of speaking. At the end of that exceedingly long hour, the girl who had been busily typewriting approached and asked her what she wanted, replying, when told, "Professor Guano has resigned. He hasn't been here for a week."

At first the information came as a relief. She would not have to speak her thoughts now; but as she closed the door behind her, like the night closing down upon a spring day, a sense of emptyness settled down over the hopes of yesterday and obliterated them. She wanted to cry. She had seen in the distance of her gloomy confinement an open door and eagerly making towards it, had found upon her arrival that it was heavily bolted. There was nothing to do now but start back to the heart of that gloom and take up once more the burdens of her monotonous existence.

The cold air helped her collect herself somewhat. She looked about to make sure of her way. A minute after she had started to walk it occurred to her that some one had looked at her and was stopping again, she whirled about and saw Mr. Donald walking off in the opposite direction.

"What can he be doing here?" she thought. "That spoils my excuse."

Matilda was cooking her supper when Anna came in upon her with an hysterical outburst, and began, talking rapidly, to relate her experience from the time she entered the Professor's office to the discovery of Mr. Donald, on the street.

Matilda questioned her with consuming interest, and her questions annoyed Anna, almost beyond endurance. Anna didn't care to talk about the whole matter. It was all too painful—everything about it. She just felt as though she could go off and commit suicide, and the more Matilda tried to comfort her, the more she felt like doing something desperate. Finally

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Matilda temporarily relieved her by interesting herself in conjectures concerning Donald's appearance near the University.

"Do you suppose they'll make trouble for you?" asked Matilda.

"Why should they make trouble for me?"

"Well, I thought they may think that you were working with the professor in the strike and—"

Anna interrupted her. "I never thought of that. Oh, I don't think so. I don't care anyway."

Matilda began to talk of Fred again, and Anna took the first opportunity to tell her that she was too sleepy to remain up any longer. She hurried off to bed; while Matilda remained in the kitchen awaiting Carl, and knowing that Anna had not gone to bed to sleep.

For an hour or more, Anna lay thinking desperate thoughts, and then, contrary to her expectations, she fell asleep and slept soundly.

The night's sleep had brought about a revulsion of her feelings. The pale light of the slum morning streamed through the window, and Anna, while dressing, told herself that she felt good, that she didn't care anything about Fred, that her life might have been much worse if he had tried to be kind to her, that she never wanted his kindness merely, that if he couldn't treat her like a human being like himself, she would rather never have heard from him, that she wouldn't throw herself at any one, no matter how she felt towards him; and that, after all, with all his goodness, he had been mean and inconsiderate to her.

She was inspired to do, as she had never before been inspired. "If he is alive and does some day come back," she told herself, "I will show him that I, too, have something worth while in me." She would go back to the evening school and work hard. She re-

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membered that he liked music and dreamed of studying. She promised herself that if things went well, she would rent a piano. Oh, the things she was going to do! What she was going to make of herself! She was glad that she had not been able to speak to Professor Guano. She was determined to make something of herself and reach his world and its inhabitants by merit.

She made her own coffee and started off to the shop before Matilda was up. She would have liked to tell Matilda what she hoped to do, but she was afraid that Matilda would realize what had caused her unexpected determination, and actually sneaked out of the house. She had started half an hour earlier than usual and had taken a roundabout way, feeling the need of the walk. When she reached the shop and began her work, she was not with her shopmates at all. She was miles, leagues away and above them, doing already the great things she was going to do. But she came to earth again suddenly. When the foreman had his shop at work in the usual order, he came up to her and told her that he had been ordered to discharge her, that, much as he regretted it, she would have to take her belongings and go at once.

She was given no reason or excuse and asked for none. The foreman had handed her a little envelope with what was due her for the few days she had worked in the new week, and, taking it, her face pale and ghostly, she grabbed her belongings from a heap of clothes and, without putting her coat on, rushed out into the hallway.

She thought at first of going into the office and offering her excuse, but her pride would not allow her to do so and, feeling that she was a good worker and could get work anywhere, she left the shop where she had been making shirts for sixteen years, leaving be-

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hind her, her girlhood and a great part of her womanhood and going with empty hands.

Out doors she stood bewildered. What to do, where to go, she did not know. She had a suspicion that she had been black-listed and was afraid to go to other shirtmakers.

She crossed the street and walked along the orphanage fence, stopping before an open window from whence came monotonous sounds of youngsters at work in the serving room. The sound of clashing dishes, knives, and forks and the swish of brooms sweeping the floor, brought back to her, painful recollections and a longing for her childhood and another chance to grow up differently. She stood there fascinated. A great desire came over her to walk in and ask permission to climb up to the dormitory where she used to bury herself in her little bed and think over the events of the monotonous days and weeks, but she smiled faintly at herself, and walked away, muttering as she went, "They'd think I was crazy."

She dreaded facing Matilda with the news, remembering how alarmed Matilda had been by the fear of such a thing the night before, and decided not to let her know what had happened, in the hope that by the time pay day arrived, she would have another job.

All day she wandered about going where her retrospective mood led her. It was a holiday she was never to forget. It was one of those days of noiseless events that come so rarely in our lives and cast a sunset light over the rest of our existence, filling the spheres of memory with music, voicing the only answer man has heard to the eternal human wish to know—what for?

She strolled along the river side and then took a ferry across to the Jersey shore. There she started off

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on foot toward a woody strip, taking with her some peanuts and fruit.

She crossed the entire length of a glen of leafless trees and sat down on a huge stone to eat her lunch, looking off towards a streaky cloud in the western sky.

Through with her lunch she started back towards the river gazing through open spaces upon trains flying along the river side and going to the Catskills, then as evening drew near started for home.

She helped Matilda prepare supper and did so with a smiling face. She helped her clear the dishes after supper and sat way into the night glad that she had Matilda near her and glad to talk to her about Fred, discussing his life, and her experiences with him, concluding that that which had driven him into obscurity, had been an irresistible force, and not meanness, or selfishness.

Next day she started looking for a job with great hopes, going to the shirt makers with fearlessness, but by the end of the day she was convinced that she had been black-listed. Wherever she went there was nothing for her. Saturday was coming and the few cents she had received in her little envelope had disappeared. All week long she had eaten but what little life demanded of her for she could not eat the food for which she feared she would not be able to pay. She had, during the six months strike, spent every cent that she had saved in the few preceding years and was still indebted to Matilda to the extent of two weeks board.

Saturday morning came. She gulped down her coffee and disappeared as if she were late and in a hurry to get to the machine at the side of which she would now have been glad to be. She climbed some seven flights of stairs in a strange factory building

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and was refused attention. She started down those stairs with a frightful premonition that she would collapse before she reached the street. On the fourth floor her nervous descent was obstructed by a man on crutches. She was unreasonably impatient with him as nervous people are, and a brutal feeling for which she could neither account nor be held responsible, tempted her to shove him out of her way, but she quickly regained control over herself and flushed red at the thought of her own brutality, forced herself to feel that she must be patient, and walked slowly a step at a time, behind him.

When he reached the next landing he stepped aside to let her pass and made a remark to the effect that he regretted being in her way as if he had felt her feelings toward him.

Anna was ashamed of herself and wished to smile at him to show that she had nothing against him and in doing so caught a glimpse of his face. She stopped a moment as if to try to recollect just who he was, then suddenly remembering she cried, "Hello, Mr. Denelli."

Mr. Denelli stopped to stare at her a moment, then recognizing her almost went into fits of delight. He insisted on her going up again with him desiring to show her the shop he had been able to build up for himself.

"Do you know where Mr. Kaye is?" he inquired, stopping in the middle of the stairway to do so.

She gave him some doubtful information as if she was ashamed to tell the truth, but he was not satisfied. What he wanted was Mr. Kaye's whereabouts. He had promised himself that before he died he would return some act of kindness, for what Mr. Kaye had done for him.

He took her through the little kimona shop, the

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smallest and dirtiest room in the building and told her how with the money Fred had secured for him he had started a little shop in his own home, getting the poor immigrants, his countrymen, who couldn't find employment, to work for him. He went into detail as to how it all came about and then begged her to sit down and talk with him awhile.

Anna was glad to talk with him in the hope that she could get him to help her. She joined him in calling Androon a murderer saying it was at his shop that her girlhood and youth had been murdered, and won his lasting sympathy. She went on telling him about the struggles of the strikers and the failure of the strike and of her being black-listed.

At last, growing red in the face, she asked him for a loan of ten dollars, tears rolling down her cheeks as she did. Mr. Denelli frowned, bit his lip, stopped to think a moment, then making for a drawer in the table near which he sat, he opened it, took a key from his pocket and unlocked with nervous fingers a dirty steel box he kept there. He bit his lips several times and tried to keep off the frown on his face, and then finally pulled out two five dollar bills from a very small soiled packet and handed them to her, saying that he was very glad to help a friend of Mr. Kaye.

When Anna assured him that as soon as she was at work again, she would make it her business to save and pay him back, Mr. Denelli regained his former attitude and asked Anna to go about the little shop once more with him and meet the different members of his family who were working there.

"I'd give you a job," he said when they were both going down stairs again, "but business is very bad. I have girls working for me that I'd like to send away, but you see I brought them over to this country and I've just got to keep 'em."

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They stopped in the doorway for a few minutes and then Anna began thanking him profusely as if he had rescued her bodily from a violent death, praised him for what he had accomplished since he had been hurt, and departed, promising again, to be back soon with the ten dollars.

The ten dollars in Anna's pocketbook made a great difference in her spirits and she walked along on her way home with a beaming face. But she could not help deliberating upon what had happened in this man's life that had sent him from being a mere slave beneath the will of others, to that of lord over the will of others, as it were. She remembered with a sort of sickening feeling the looks of some of the girls working for him, and a great sense of pity possessed her, pity for those girls and for all who suffer and toil, and she pitied him too.

"They worked him half to death," she said to herself, sighing, "and now he works them half to death."

At home that night, she waxed emotionally retrospective again, in telling all about Denelli, whom, she said, she had met by accident. They sat way into the night talking of the thousand memories and images that Denelli had brought with him from the past and Fred pervaded everything she said; but she did not tell Matilda of the ten dollar loan and Matilda thought that Anna had been at work as ever for Androon.

The following week passed without bringing her a job, and again she was in desperation. It was impossible for her to go to Denelli with another plea for help, yet she knew no one else who could help her.

Slowly the effects of joblessness began to tell upon her. Her spirits went low and remained low. She moped and talked suicide and Matilda could not understand what had happened to her. She ceased talking of Fred and when forced to talk of him would tell

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Matilda that Fred's sudden appearance, should that take place, would make absolutely no difference to her whatever, and that if she were not too much of a coward she would betake herself from her remaining hours of shadow and strife. She would say these things only when Matilda forced her to speak and at other times she sank into an habitual silence and Matilda observing her, worried herself sick. Carl had acquired the habit of staying out late nights, and did no work in school, and Matilda constantly wept because of him.

When Friday of the last of the two weeks that Denelli's money made her paying Matilda possible arrived, Anna looked like a skeleton and felt worse. There was no question in her mind now but that she had been black-listed, and she told herself that there was but one thing for her to do and that was to seek Androon and beg for his forgiveness despite her antipathy to doing so.

Rumors had it that Androon spent most of his time in a little room on the second floor of his hotel and restaurant, drinking good wines and counting his money. She made her way to this his second establishment next Monday morning and after getting over the uncertainty regarding its location, due to its very recent and very elaborate alterations, she climbed with beating heart to the second floor and found him in the much discussed little room, playing solitaire and drinking wine.

Contrary to her fear that he would drive her out he almost welcomed her. He was apparently in very high spirits, there being several empty bottles on the floor, seemed to know just what had brought her there, and was inclined to be over nice to her. Anna needed his hospitality, questionable as it was, and gained strength from it. He asked her to be seated, offered

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her some wine, which she refused, and expressed with great redundancy his willingness to listen to her.

His mustache was wet with constant drinking, and he kept shoving back the collarless shirt exposing a frightfully hairy breast. It was very warm in the room and he insisted on her taking off her wraps.

She managed to get him to listen without taking off her wraps and began explaining to him the circumstances that had brought her there, and it seemed to her as she spoke that he didn't hear a word she said.

The interview began to have a horrible effect upon her and she decided several times to get up and leave, but always the desperation that had driven her there, kept her in her seat and gave her strength with which to take advantage of his condition. When he moved up nearer to her and stretched out one of his gorilla paws till it rested heavily upon her shoulder, she did not resist as she would have liked to do.

"If you were a pretty girl," he said out of the warmth of his heart and in response to his appeal for reinstatement at the shop, "I'd have something better for you; but—you are a nice girl, mind you—I don't say you aren't at all—not at all—not by a long shot—but you know, we need very pretty girls in this business. That is, not that we need them, not that I always need them, not so many of them; but they just come here, see. And my word goes, see! No matter what I say, goes, now that's so an' you know it."

On top of the huge safe that stood a few feet from the table was a heap of paper, an ink stand and several pens, and Anna, carefully working her way out of his embrace, got up to get these things. Bringing them to the table, she shoved them under his nose and asked him to write an order to Donald to reinstate her in her former position.

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To Anna's amazement, after having begun to write, Androon suddenly stopped, sat back, looked at her closely and then breaking into a smile again, began to talk in drunken fashion, "You won't have nothing more to do with that horrible little professor, that we fired the other day, will you? He's no good! Keep away from him. He's what you call a real trouble maker. I've given you your bread and butter for many years now, haven't I? Yes, yes, that's right, your bread and butter for many years. You keep away from the little professor an' all will be well."

Anna nodded very submissively and Androon began to write again.

When the note was written, Anna took it from him hastily and started to go. He asked her to wait a minute, not to be in a hurry, to sit down again, told her that he was a good friend of hers and a father to all the girls that worked for him. Fearing that he was going to continue that rambling talk all day, Anna made a most fervent appeal for his pardon, told him she wanted to get right to work at the shop and with a very cordial good-bye, left him.

Jubilant over her success, she hurried along making straight for the shop where she found Donald busy at his desk. She waited nervously for him for some time, before he condescended to speak to her. When she handed him the note and he had read it, he turned to her and began giving her some more friendly advice. She tolerated it for awhile, then by the expression on her face tried to discourage him.

Finally he stopped, rang the bell for the foreman, and when that individual appeared, instructed him to reinstate Anna in her former place at the machine.

Anna experienced a very queer feeling upon entering the shop room where she had been at work for so many years. Her fellow workers, however greeted

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her smilingly and before long she was busily at work "Thanking her lucky stars" for having regained the opportunity to work for Androon, to turn her blood into wine.

At home that night she was very happy. She had brought all kinds of things with her which she had bought to celebrate her victory, while she sat through the hours telling Matilda in detail everything she had endured within the last few weeks, and as she spoke, the chamois bag suspended from her neck and concealing the hundred dollar bill, tortured Matilda.

CHAPTER VII.

On those days that Carl did appear in school, he made it his business to keep out of trouble. It was a "best policy" with him. But there were times when either his inability to remain quiet as long as that was required, or the annoyance of some neighbor's act brought trouble upon him. He was fourteen years old and his kind, young-lady teacher never missed the chance to tell him, in the hearing of the entire class, that he had no business to be in a "baby class" that he was old enough to have graduated from the public schools, long ago. Carl's only reply to that remark was an underbreath, long-drawn "eh." It never occurred to his teacher that in spite of that sneer and the apparent expression of indifference, there was growing upon him a harmful weight in the idea that he was different from other boys.

When he could not bear the abstract ideas or figures that she tried to get into his head, Carl's maturing mind dreamed great dreams, not great according to her notions, or perhaps very base according to the

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notions of most good people, but great nevertheless, great with the significance they might have had.

But his unbearable school life was destined to end sooner than he had hoped it would. The class was engaged in another reading lesson. In the midst of his wild, wandering dreams there came the fear, that he was going to be called upon to read and not knowing the number of the page where the class was reading, he bent forward and asked a goody-goody boy in front of him for it. Willie Stevens, considered an A boy was very jealous of his reputation and not only to show that he was beyond falling, but possibly to gain more laurels thereby, he flew up instantly and getting his teacher's attention, cried excitedly "He's trying to get me into trouble."

Carls anger got the best of him. He jumped up from his seat, struck at his good neighbor's face coming within an inch of breaking Willie's glasses, then sat down to worry while his victim howled.

Miss Wilson turned pale.

"Come here!" she cried.

Carl didn't budge.

"Did you hear what I said?" she demanded, stamping her foot.

Carl looked up at her with a doubtful, terror stricken expression but failed to move.

Miss Wilson had an idea that a bad boy like Carl who had always been bad throughout his school career, might be treated severely with impunity. She was very tired of sending him to the office and of his coming back with a sneer as if he had had a good time there. The boy was demoralizing her entire class. She decided to take the matter into her own hands. Her anger white hot, she grabbed a ruler and started for him. But before she reached him, he rose, and ran for the door in the rear of the room with her

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after him. The janitor happened to be in the hallway and collared him before he could make his escape.

Carl filled the hallways with his cries, but the more he yelled the tighter grew the janitor's grip.

"Take him to the principal's office," cried Miss Wilson shaking with excitement.

Suddenly, with a deft move, Carl wrenched himself from the janitor's hold and before that official could grab him again, he threw himself flat upon the floor, face down.

The janitor, big man that he was, tugged at him with all his strength but failed to move him. Finally with one very determined pull he ripped the boy's coat from front to back.

At sight of the torn coat, both janitor and teacher were alarmed, the former relinquishing his hold of the youngster.

Taking advantage of the situation, Carl made a great dash through the swinging doors at the end of the hallway and up the stairs.

Thinking that he had gone down stairs enroute to the street, the janitor, in his excitement unable to locate the rapid steps on the stone stairs, hurried down while Miss Wilson nervous and worried, reentered her class room.

Carl had had the self control to know that he would be safer going up, and on the quiet fourth floor, he hid in an open cloak room, in the hallway.

Looking about he found a hat and coat that fitted him and leaving the remnants of his own, he put the new coat on and tip-toed across the hallway to the other staircase, and from there made his way cautiously to the street, where he started on a run, running till he reached the river side. There out of breath, he sat down on a bench in spite of the cold. Oh, how he hated school and teachers, janitors and

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goody-goody boys. He hated his dark home and mother's constant nagging and scolding. He wanted to run away. The burdens of life hung so heavily upon him he despised everything and everybody, but he was yet dependent and knew of no refuge.

He rose and started off on a fast walk. He wound about aimlessly through streets and between tenements, among children going home from school, among policemen and officious looking men, between working men and women, winding about in a circle and coming once more upon the river. He gazed with ineffable longing upon the open Hudson and upon its irresistible waves struggling with floating masses of ice.

He followed the shore keeping his gaze upon the great river. A tug boat made its appearance and struggling through the floating ice, it filled him with the desire to sail away, to wash off the bitter associations of home and school and fly to the siren-like arms of the world.

He walked on till evening came and hunger and want of rest drove him in the direction of home. He came upon a busy street where throngs passed either way. On one corner was a grocery store and a barrel of apples stood among a group of other barrels on the sidewalk. Three times he passed and repassed it among the pedestrians till his opportunity came, and stretching out a dirty, bony hand he earned himself an apple and a few blocks further down, devoured it with relish, finding it good.

It grew colder. He shoved his hands into the newly acquired coat and to his unbounded delight, his hands touched a silver half dollar, and his soul lit up like the store windows about him with all their enticing exhibitions.

It was nine o'clock when after getting a heap of

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frankfurters and eating them all on the street, he came upon Mrs. Valey's candy store. The near-sighted old lady sold him some candy without recognizing him, and to his question concerning Jimmie and the girls, replied that they had been in there for a few moments and had gone out again. A feeling of emptiness came over him, and the wild thoughts of the day had so weakened him that the disappointment of not finding them, brought tears to his eyes.

He left the store and wandered about in quest of them like a poisoned rat in quest of water—up one street and down another, through the cold and deserted little park with the sky, gray and ominous through the bare limbs of the trees, and back again, staring wildly and seeking in vain. Finally, hopeless, miserable to the extreme, he started back to old lady Valey's, deciding to lay the matter before her and to appeal to her for shelter. He was determined not to go home.

No whipped, homeless dog, driven and kicked wherever he sought a resting place, finding in all the endlessness of winter streets not even a place to die, could have looked more hopeless and forlorn than he did when he dragged himself in to Mrs. Valey's store.

He ordered a soda in the hope that with that she would admit him into the rear room. He felt he could appeal to her more strongly, there. But Mrs. Valey had no sodas at that time of the year and merely looked at him a moment with suspicion. He then asked for several different kinds of candy and holding the bag in his hand stood there quietly eating some of it. She thought that he didn't want to go home until he had eaten all of his candy and waited for him. Mrs. Valey was sleepy. Her head fell forward on her bosom, and her heavy breathing told him that she was asleep. With a flash of hope he stole quietly along

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the store, up the few wooden steps, through the narrow corridor into the large room. He lit the gas and seated himself on the sofa to dream of the times he had had there, and to worry his way to some kind of a plan.

Mrs. Valey awoke suddenly, proceeded to close up for the night and when through started for the kitchen. The light in her main room surprised her and scolding herself for having left the gas burning, she hurried in to put it out.

Suddenly becoming aware of some one on the sofa, she yelled horribly, "What are you doing here?"

"You said I could go in," said Carl pretending to be offended.

"I said you could go in?" she yelled again, approaching him cautiously to make sure who it was.

"Yes, you did," he insisted, "before you fell asleep."

"But my lands, boy, it's late. What do you want to do here now?"

Carl made an attempt to unburden himself. It was very hard for him, but his condition was desperate and he stuttered his story without attempting to keep back his tears or to control the whimper in his voice.

Mrs. Valey argued against all his plans and insisted on his going home. She would not hear of his staying over night and gave him a great deal of advice; but Carl had sensed a touch of sympathy in her voice and refused to leave. When he began to cry, the old lady's sympathy increased and though she did not consent to his staying there for the night, in the hope that some one would come for him, she offered to make him something warm to drink.

She boiled some water and gave him a cup of it with a bit of milk in it, and took a cup of the same stuff for herself. They sat opposite each other at the

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table drinking a sip at a time, he in the hope that the night would pass that way, and she in the hope that some one would come for him.

After discussing the whole matter all over again, and once more falling into a deep silence, Carl, who had been studying the portrait that hung on the wall opposite him, wished to know who the nice young man was, adding the lie, that they had all admired that picture every time they had met in that room.

It was her brother she said, and fell into a very thoughtfull mood. He was the nicest boy that ever lived. He had been strong and healthy and as Carl and his friends had no doubt seen, very handsome. He had been a student too, and had just returned from the city where he had been studying law (they lived on a farm then) when the war that was raging between the North and South had demanded his service. He was gone a few months and had written such hopeful letters, when one day he wrote that he had to go to the front, and before the first day of battle had ended, he was lying dead under a heap of his comrades. A friend who had escaped with a leg and an arm shot off, had himself seen him fall.

The poor woman wept bitterly. It was the death of her mother first and her father later. They had placed their hope in him. The father was not very strong and things on the farm went to ruin. Walter (her brother) had made it the dream of his youth to become a lawyer and to pay off the mortgage. He had promised to do so much for his little sister whom he loved more than any one in his life.

Carl looked at her. He experienced a queer feeling at his heart at the thought that she had been "a little sister" at one time. He was very sorry for her, but glad that he had led her into so long a story.

She told him, the tears trickling down her old,

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sorrow-worn cheeks, that she had resolved never to bring children into the world if that's what might happen to them.

Carl looked at the picture. That might happen to him too, then. Was it going to happen to him? He looked at the big forehead in the picture. "Gee! that shot a hole through." He saw the hole and he saw the blood pouring out. "Gee! that nice fellow in a whole pile of other fellows, all on top of him. Dead and gone nothing left of him now! Gee!"

Poor Mrs. Valey sobbed as though it had happened but a few days back. She never would forget it and she didn't care how people made believe they honered him. All she cared about was that he had been alive and healthy, and would have made a big lawyer. Now he was long dead, and no matter where she would run in this world she could not find him. Had he not been killed, she would not now be an old helpless woman, alone and miserable.

Carl listened to her attentively and was sincerely sorry for her. He thought it funny that what stories of war he had caught from conversations and reading in the class room had sounded so differently, and he was sure that the teacher he hated, had lied to him. He told that to Mrs. Valey and she agreed with him.

"Those girls don't know what it is to have a brother like that," she cried pointing at the picture, "and to have him go out to be torn to pieces."

Mrs. Valey had excited herself. It had been years since she had had the opportunity to so pour out her burdened heart. She told Carl of all the thousand things she and her brother had done when they had been small, ending with a repetition of the pathetic story of her brother's loss and found him a sympathetic listener. Carl expressed his sympathy in his childish way. They were murderers he told her and

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—but he got stuck there. He wanted to tell her what he'd do or like to do, but he realized that what he was going to say was foolish and she helped him by continuing her wailing tale, and showing that she appreciated his sympathy. Her heart warmed towards this little soldier and after a protracted retelling of all the incidents associated in her mind with the picture she loved, she rose and began to make his bed on the sofa; while Carl watched her with tears in his eyes, wishing that he knew how he might assure her that if she took care of him, he would go to work and help her.

And all that while, Matilda paced the floor of her kitchen and worried and fretted, imagining him before her and scolding him roundly at one time, only to regret it the next minute when the fear that something had harmed him, crept upon her. As the time wore on she grew more and more fearful and kept going into the cold front room to look out upon the street in the hope of seeing him.

She heard lonely footfalls every now and then, but footfalls of big feet; and her boy, upon whom the adult-like consciousness of the struggle of life was forcing itself by degrees, was yet a baby, and she could easily distinguish the sound of his walk from that of older night walkers.

When the fear of his having been hurt dismissed her anger and accentuated her love, she thought of the soles of his little feet as still small and red, though she knew that they must be calloused for part of the journey which she had so often tried to foresee, was already done. But that it was a great part that was done, she did not know.

It grew very late. Matilda became frantic with watching, and surmising. She put a shawl over her head and shoulders and went out. She walked the

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streets like a mad woman, staring desperately in every direction and crying softly to herself.

She thought Jimmie might be home and might know what had happened to Carl. She hastened back, and glided through the hallway and up the foul-smelling stairways of the tenement in the rear. Jimmie's mother had been unable to sleep and was still up with her mending when Matilda broke in upon her.

The two women aired their grievances against their two bad boys and went to Jimmie's bedside and shook him into wakefulness. Four other children slept in the same stuffy poverty stricken bed room and all awoke.

Jimmie did not know where Carl was, but he told Matilda what he had heard of Carl's having had trouble in school, and perceiving in this an opportunity for graft, offered to go to look for him, and Jimmie's mother shook her wrinkled forehead, granting him permission to go with Mrs. Henny.

Jimmie dressed hurriedly and then they started down the dark stairways, Mrs. Henny repeating the expression of her thankfulness to Mrs. Daniels till she was half way down the flight. Mrs. Daniels shut the door. Jimmie led and Matilda followed. What a ghastly sight they made winding down those filthy, odorous hallways. It was as if these half-dead, gruesome figures emitted the stench of decomposition that filled the underworld and kept going the hunger cry and the cries of despair that began in the early darkness, the beginning of life, and had with but little alteration come sounding down the weary ages.

On the street, Jimmie stopped and demanded that Matilda give him something for his pains, and that she allow him to go alone. Under no circumstances would he have her go along with him.

Unable to do anything else, she agreed to both

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points of his ultimatum and, instructing him to tell Carl, should he find him, that she would not punish him, she began to walk up and down in front of her home to keep warm while waiting for Jimmie's return.

True to his word, Jimmie was able to locate Carl who was about to retire on Mrs. Valey's old sofa, and with Mrs. Valey's help, persuaded him to go home.

When Matilda saw the two youngsters coming in the distance, her relief amounted to happiness, but she told herself that she ought to scold him at least, that she ought not to let him do things like that without some kind of punishment, yet, when she beheld his haggard face in the light of a street lamp, her heart ached for him and she promised herself not to punish him, though she acted as though she was very angry at him.

Jimmie went home with a promise of fifteen cents, and Carl, very tired and unwilling to open his mouth, went to bed as soon as he got into the flat, and soon fell asleep. Matilda worried about him, worried about his strange coat and cap and lay a long time in her bed, thinking the matter over and trying to come upon a plan of some sort. She worried about what he was liable to grow up to be and would have done anything, would have sacrificed everything and herself, too, to prevent his growing worse; but there was nothing she could do and she had nothing to sacrifice. The hundred dollars that like "a scarlet letter" burned on her bosom could do nothing for him. The only remedy, she felt, was to take him out upon a little farm; but that could not be bought for several times that hundred dollar bill, and she wished again for the thousandth time that she had not taken the money.

The haggard face haunted her. She imagined herself on her knees by his bedside, begging him to tell her what made that little face so haggard, and plead-

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ing with him to do as she wanted him to. All that imagining woke a great desire in her and she stole off her bed and very quietly went to his bedside.

There were still lights burning in an unhappy slum home in the rear and the gas-light, red and sickly, crawled through the two windows and poured upon Carl's disheveled hair. She bent over him cautiously. She read the struggles of the day upon his face, in his frown, and over his closed eyelids. She wanted to satisfy the maternal desire to press her lips against the wrinkled little forehead and lowered her head slowly.

Suddenly she was aware of something dropping and striking his cheek. She jumped back frightened, her heart beating furiously and the blood rushing to her head. She lowered her head again to see what it had been when with a tug at her heart she came to the realization that her chamois bag hanging about her neck and sealed over Anna's hundred dollar bill had been the thing that had so ominously fallen. It had struck his cheek a second time and in his sleep he lifted his hand and wiped the spot that the bag had touched.

Matilda was heart-broken. This was an admonition from God, she told herself and went back to her bed to do penance for the rest of the night.

"And yet," she argued trying in vain to fall asleep, "how could it have done anything else but fall, when I bent down?"

CHAPTER VIII.

The next few months brought great changes into Carl's life, and often during the rest of his existence he looked back upon that period of transition as the blackest space of time in his struggle to live—in his struggle toward maturity. Not that he suffered less in after-years, but because the schooling of the bit-

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terness of those twenty weeks had taught him to face with less expectation, with less hope and enthusiasm all that followed; and whenever painful experiences came into his life, he would unconsciously blame that beginning with the feeling that it was responsible for all his misery and wretchedness.

For two weeks he argued with his mother, and then Matilda consented to his going to work.

He determined to show his gratitude and fate gave him an opportunity. There came a time very soon after he had tasted the delusive joy of packing shirts for Androon, when nature punished his mother for having dedicated so much of her vitality to knitting baby moccasins. She was obliged to stop it on penalty of impending death or insanity.

It seemed to Matilda that his faculties had suddenly awakened. She had never seen him act towards her before as he acted then. He became deeply concerned about her and made all manner of provisions for her comfort. He brought things home with him that he thought would make her feel better, such as an orange one day or some dates another—according to his means. He stayed home by her bedside almost every night and talked with her of the future—a time in his life that had not concerned him at all before. He went to see Mrs. Daniels the first day of Matilda's illness and made an arrangement with her whereby she was to spend as much of her day-time as she possibly could nursing his mother. She came every day and sat for hours rapidly and with endless repetition telling Matilda of all her troubles. She told how her work-worn husband abused her when after the day's labors he came home despondent. She told of her happy youth—the youth that now seemed to have been so happy—and contrasted to the minutest details what life had been for her with what life then was, and

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always ended with a terrible expression, which had various forms—of her utter hopelessness for the future. Matilda's heart throbbed with contrition and by expressing that sympathy, she helped the poor woman and helped herself.

Matilda got well in a few weeks and Mrs. Daniels ceased coming save now and then to repeat her tales of woe. Then one day Mrs. Daniels' little girl came rushing in and with hysterical shrieks demanded Matilda's going up to see her mother at once. Matilda rushed up the rear tenement to find Mrs. Daniels automatically fainting and reviving herself, with her youngsters, all but Jimmie who had secured a job with a printer, shrieking about her.

Mr. Daniels had been killed at the foundry where he worked and his corpse was soon to be brought home. Matilda tried to pacify the terror-stricken Mrs. Daniels and other neighbors came to her assistance.

Poor Mrs. Daniels got over her loss as best she could and then, one day Matilda escorted her and her little group to the doorway out in front. Her bit of furniture and other belongings had gone before her in a rickety junk dealer's wagon.

The departure of Jimmie, between whom and Carl nature and circumstances had already been weaving differences, came upon Carl with a sickening sense of emptiness, and now that Matilda was well again he had promised himself to go out evenings, to "look up the girls and Jimmie" and have or try to have good times; but something seemed wrong. Little Minnie and Agnes too seemed to have lost step in his march and had almost imperceptibly drifted away. He felt a great desire to find them, but he had no energy to search with. The winter evenings were cold and the winter mornings were even colder and Matilda wanted to economize in her use of coal. During each day he

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would promise himself to attempt the search at night, but each night he clung to the stove. Every morning he rose early in his cold uncomfortable room desiring with all his soul a few more moments of sleep, and, at night, remembering that feeling, he would go to bed early.

Then came a time when in spite of the cold, in spite of his weariness he found himself treading the streets. Night after night he would come to Mrs. Valey's candy store, buy candy there, linger about the place for a while, then rush off to the little park, where he would parade the streets hoping in vain to meet some one of them.

Spring came. He woke one of those mornings with a violent headache, and strangely, with no desire to remain in bed. He jumped out and dressed hurriedly. Something was in that polluted slum air, something he had never breathed in it and it lit his soul with rebellion. Never had he hated the shop so much as he did that morning, and he had hated it all winter long. The thought of the smell of cloth, and the grind of the machinery maddened him. He would not endure it, he told himself and hurried out of the house without breakfast.

He came to the tenement where lived Willie Bradd, the boy who worked with him packing shirts for Androon, and found Willie descending the stairs on his way to work.

Willie greeted him warmly and the two started towards the shop, Willie listening very attentively and with all his simple heart sympathizing with the cause; but Carl's suggestions were impossible. Willie assured him.

"Oh, impossible!" repeated Willie, "Oh, no! just couldn't do it. Mother would—! Oh, no. Impossible!"

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"You need it," cried Carl in desperation, "You're all bone, and you know you are, an' one day out of your salary won't kill your mother. We need a good time once in awhile. Your mother won't lose more'n seventy-five cents, an' we'll be able to work better all week."

Willie was two years older and had a stronger understanding. He would like to go off for a trip to the river or anywhere, but he just couldn't do it; and as he spoke they were approaching the shop.

"Tell you what I promise you to do," he said finally, attempting to enthuse the lowered face of poor Carl, "I'm going to do this. I'm going to save up my money as soon as my mother doesn't need it so much and when I have enough, what I'm going to do, Collie old boy, is to go out into the country and get jobs there and work myself up. You're right all right, this rotten old shop'll never give us a chance. You do as I do. Let's you and me go together."

They stood awhile before the horrid building and discussed the matter in detail. Willie told in the most glowing terms all that he had ever heard about farms and working in the country. He told of being so healthy that you never have a headache in fifty years. He told him of milking cows and drinking the milk rich and warm, told of raking hay and singing at the top of one's voice for sheer gladness, and so fired Carl's imagination that when Anna appeared he walked right into the shop with all of them, anxious for the end of the day so that he could tell his mother all about saving, so that by the end of May or June they could have enough to try their scheme. He determined to go alone should Willie back out.

All morning long they worked with great enthusiasm. Carl had never felt towards his work like that, since his first day there and at noon they ate their

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lunches together and planned every little detail, Willie inspiring Carl with the feeling that if they worked harder and better they could ask for a raise in their wages and could save more rapidly.

But a great blow came upon their schemes. They were working very enthusiastically that afternoon, when Willie, inspired with the new hope, grabbed an immense parcel and attempted to carry it from the room. He accomplished the feat after much exertion and came back limping, frowning, and complaining of a pain in his side.

He did not finish that day's work. Within an hour he was taken to the hospital in an ambulance. Carl was informed late next day that he had undergone an operation for appendicitis and had died under the knife. The doctors claimed his constitutional condition to have been very bad and attributed his death to his depleted system.

Carl had received many blows—many disappointments had shattered his dreams, but never such a one. By the time the new boy came to take Willie's place, his fear of the possibility of going the way of Willie had reached its climax, and, mustering all his strength, Carl rebelled.

On Saturday night, when Carl received his little envelope, he told the foreman that he was not coming back any more and hurried out.

He gave Matilda what was due her but did not tell her what he had done. Sunday morning he got up early as usual and went out for a walk to think the matter over. He came upon the street where he had escorted Minnie so many times and a great desire to see her took hold of him. As if he expected her to be there, he began to search with his eyes every direction and every pedestrian. He had just passed the doorway of a grocery store when he saw the image

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he had had in his mind, considerably modified, in the semi-darkness of the interior of the store. He walked off a few steps and turned about again and when he reached the door, Minnie, carrying a pitcher of milk and scantily dressed, issued. She was delighted to see him and he was most happy to see her, and as they walked along, they planned to meet in the evening.

All the rest of the day, Carl was in a very much happier mood and began to regret having given up his job. Now that he had met her again there seemed to be something worth working for and he told himself that what had made his shop-work so unendurable was that he had had no pleasure.

They had no trouble in getting into Mrs. Valey's back-room that night. Carl assured the old lady that they were going to come often and that he would spend all his spending money there because he really liked going there better than going to moving picture shows.

Minnie sat on the couch and leaned against the wall, her lovely braid hanging down over her little bosom. Carl rested his head against her shoulder and little by little his forehead moved towards her warm neck. He told her about Mrs. Valey's brother and was disappointed to hear Minnie laugh occasionally and to have her call upon him to tell her something more pleasant; but she was so lovely anyway that he forgot his disappointment and sailed off in another and very much pleasanter direction, keeping the story he had intended to tell her, the story of poor Willie Bradd, to himself.

The things they talked about! The promises they made! Poor Carl! How many a bitter moment in his after-life, with that forehead aching for the touch and the warmth of that soft neck, buried in the coarse sleeves of his arms, he dreamed of that evening! How

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many tears he shed over recollections of it, when tears in his dark grave-like solitude were all he had.

They returned to their homes when they had to, unconscious of the lingering that that parting merited. They repeated the details of their next meeting and Carl went home to bed happy.

But when he woke next morning, the horrors of his situation came upon him with full force. He got up early and hurried away, cursing himself as he went for having thrown up the job that should have given him a little spending money and without which all his plans concerning Minnie looked dubious.

All day he searched for a new job, swearing at himself for having thrown up the other, and after a fruitless search he walked into his home unwilling to partake of the evening meal. Next day was but a repetition of the first and so was the one after that and by Thursday morning he lost his hope of finding a job at all.

It was yet early Thursday morning. He was making his way to the business streets, when he passed the open door of Mrs. Valey's candy store. He wondered why she had gotten up so early and reminded himself that he had thought of asking her to give him candy which he could take out and sell for her in the street, and accordingly walked in with the feeling that he might as well ask her about that now as later. The appearance of the store looked rather strange to him, and just before he was going to call to her, for she was not there, a strong impulse seized him. An impulse like that which used to send him down at night to his mother's pocketbook, and he stole back of the counter with a beating heart. He did not have a cent in his pocket and the following evening he was to meet Minnie.

But he had but taken a few steps back of the coun-

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ter when he saw that the cash box was broken and parts of it lay on the floor. He realized that the old lady had already been robbed and decided that the best thing he could do would be to rush out and get as far away from the store as he could. He heard her coming and in his excitement made the mistake of his life. After falling over something the thief had dropped near the doorway, he rushed out and ran, running into two men on their way to work who stopped to swear at him.

The old lady, on seeing the door open, rushed out into the street and yelled, "I've been robbed, I've been robbed!"

Instantly the two men turned and pursued the flying Carl and catching him, brought him back by the collar, protesting and crying hysterically.

At sight of him, Mrs. Valey went wild. She slapped him, shook him and yelled like a mad woman, then making sure of his security, hurried back to her cash box to see whether he had taken her money. Finding it broken and empty, she rushed back into the street where the two men were holding the youngster, and demanded that he return her money to her.

Carl insisted that he didn't have it and pleaded with her, but it was in vain. The woman had lost her whole month's earnings as well as the receipts that were to pay her bills and in desperation wept like a child.

A crowd gathered. Carl's shame and agony were exquisite. He was pale as a ghost and his feet trembled under him. He realized the hopelessness of insisting upon his innocence and closed his lips tight, hoping ardently that an officer would come to take him off before any one he knew, and above all, before Minnie or one who knew Minnie should appear.

To his great relief an officer came and as he placed

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a hand on poor Carl's shoulder, there fell upon it another hand, an invisible one, the hand of doom!

CHAPTER IX.

The fact that he had had an impulse to rob Mrs. Valey, Carl dismissed from his mind. If the door had not been broken open by the real robber, he would never have had the impulse. He was, in his own mind, absolutely innocent, but no one believed him, and he wondered how it was possible for people to be so utterly unjust. Matilda alone seemed to believe him and showed, by the unfailing attention and encouragement she gave him, while she waited for his trial in the Children's Court, what a mother she might have been, had the world needed fewer moccasins. She begged him not to get excited, to tell his story clearly, and to trust to the wisdom of the judge who was his friend and would surely release him.

If the scowling-faced judge had known what implicit faith the slum-branded youngster had in him, he might have looked deeper than was necessary for the gathering of superficial evidence and might have held back the sword, which was about to fall upon the chanceless boy. But had the judge been capable of looking deeper than the surface, he would have had to be slightly above the ordinary mortal, as Carl thought he was. That he was a most ordinary man whose memory was stocked with terms and notions. Carl was incapable of concluding; but one thing that gentleman's decision made him sure of, and that was that the learned as well as the unlearned were against him. Judges, he concluded, can't or don't want to find the truth any more than the ignorant Mrs. Valey who

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couldn't write her own name even as decently as he could write it for her.

When at last he found himself being shipped away to the city reformatory with but one person in all the world believing in his innocence, he loved that one person as much more ardently because of it, as he hated more bitterly the world against him.

He was not ashamed of any act which he had committed, nor was there a single act that he had committed which he regretted. He insisted as tenaciously to himself as he did to the judge, that he had done nothing wrong. He was ashamed of the fact that he had allowed himself to get so excited as to run into those "damnable" two workers whom it would have been the joy of his life to strike upon the head with a club or a brick. Oh, if he could just land on them! In the dark! so that he would not be caught. Oh, if he could get an invisible coat and could just creep up to them, to Mrs. Valey, to the policeman and the judge and wreak his vengeance! How he gloated in his soul over their imaginary fright and cries for help. Society had given him his first lesson in criminality and had written the first word of his doom.

Poor Carl! The red little soles of his baby feet struck the first heap of broken glass on the first great turn in his path and bled, leaving it red behind him, and poor, broken-hearted Matilda, cursing herself for her all consuming devotion to all other baby feet but those of her own baby, with a handkerchief to her swollen eyes trailed on wearily behind, and, with the unbounded devotion of motherhood, sought in vain to wash the red stains away with her affluent tears.

Together with half a dozen other boys, each of whom felt the weight of circumstances and the impending terrors too heavy upon heart and brain to admit of much speech, Carl was taken from the world

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he had known upon a boat to an island—to a world he did not know, made terrible with many forebodings of evil. Everything looked black, and ominous and heartless, from the trimmed hedge, the lawn, and the great gloomy walls to the old soldier in charge of quarantine room, where a rumor told him he was to be kept for two weeks.

Carl never forgot that trip across the river. Sensations he had experienced in those fifteen minutes clung to the walls of his consciousness until the walls fell and disappeared. One of the six who went with them was a neatly dressed, ruddy-faced youngster somewhat older than he. They had said nothing to each other and Carl had heard but one remark that he had made to the officer, but Carl loved him from the moment his eyes fell upon him. That face was the only ray of light, though the whole dome above was clear and blue and cloudless, that went with him and shone in the gloomy cave-like world, even as it later illumined his unhappy life, rushing on head-long from there.

They were dressed in uniforms and given guns, he and that good-natured stranger, whose neatness he forgave, and for endless hours his weak limbs were forced to take positions that needed the vitality of much stronger ones and the encouragement of willingness. His troubles persistently choked him. The unbearable monotony of repeated commands and twists and turns and slaps wrought a painful expression upon his prematurely old face. His gun never went from shoulder to shoulder, or down, in time. Only the whispered optimism of the boy with the golden face and the golden wavy hair made life at all endurable.

The old soldier had a rough, red-mustached, square face with fiery small eyes. He wore the trousers of a

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blue uniform with a white stripe down each outer side, and a white shirtwaist loose at the neck.

Major Dunkin was obsessed by love of authority and by the pedagogical notion that the "stricter" he was, the better influence would he have upon his victims. Without an exception, however, every boy that suffered his discipline for the two weeks, went out secretly hoping that if it was impossible for any one to kill him, or for some one to bring some dreadful disease and torture upon him, Major Dunkin might at least die a natural death before *he* left the institution.

It never entered the Major's puny mind that a boy might be too weak to drill with a heavy gun, or that the type of boy that society threw upon his care, can suffer mentally, or that that mental suffering might interfere with his willingness to learn to drill well.

To him there was but one thing in which boys were very capable and that was in what he pleased to term, "faking." "They'll fake you to distraction, if you let 'em," was an expression that with the proper emphasis helped him out of many a superior argument and that governed his actions from one end of the day to the other.

He called Carl out of line repeatedly that first afternoon but Carl, burdened by the sorrows that kept his tears near the surface, driven by fear, went but reluctantly and never with the required rapidity.

With great importance, the Major would send forth his commands as if the boys were all deaf or as if that tremendous hall had to vibrate with every command in order to have the proper effect.

But whoever may have given the old soldier the respect he desired and demanded, Carl did not. He took his learning hard and accepted many a slap, a pull, and a shout as unavoidable elements of this dreadful world that it had been his fate to be driven to.

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"You stupid, idiot," cried the Major towards the middle of the afternoon, "come out here." He was about to grab the gun from the bewildered boy and for the hundredth time show him how to perform the particular and very vital performance, when the jingling of keys interrupted him. He sent the culprit back to the line, and went to bow to the Colonel who entered with an elderly lady.

Through the corners of his eyes, Carl saw the redoubtable Colonel Mohtin, tall, dressed in blue uniform with golden epaulets, his pale flabby face with square jaws, narrowing as it slanted up and was lost in the blue cap he wore. His hands were covered with white gloves.

"Such distracting stupidity," said the Major, addressing himself to the elderly lady who was smiling profusely.

"Is that so?" asked the old lady, incomprehensibly happy.

"You can talk yourself black in the face," said the old soldier, "they don't understand a thing you say to them. Stupid!"

The old lady let down on her smiling just a trifle and shook her head in wonder, while the solemn Colonel nodded almost imperceptibly in acquiescence.

"Do you think they are defective?" asked the visitor in her prettiest manner of speech.

"Well, I d'know," replied the Major with a peculiar turn of his head and a significant smile as if he knew undoubtedly but did not care to express himself to that effect; then turning to the silent line, cried, "Hey, there, that new boy, what's his name—I usually learn those things very quickly—Collie, that's it—hey there, Collie, come over here."

Carl was horrified. The red flush broke upon his pale cheeks and the commingled feelings of anger,

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fear, and hatred, went to his head and made him dizzy. But when the command was repeated with pretentious kindliness, more hateful to Carl than the Major's usual tone of voice, he collected his senses and slowly walked towards the group like an animal going to the slaughter.

The old lady never ceased smiling, and often, long after this most wretched day, Carl wondered what she could have been smiling at, what in that grim little hell could have stimulated in her the desire to laugh.

"Do you think you know what 'right about face' means now?" asked the Major and Carl, with apparent submission managed to force between his teeth a sound similar to, "Yes, sir."

"Right! About! Face!" commanded Major Dunkin almost theatrically, but Carl just could not move.

"Did you ever see such stupidity?" shouted Major Dunkin, shaking his head and looking toward his visitors for agreement.

"May be he's defective," offered the spinster social worker.

"You'll have to turn over a new leaf," said the Major, rapping the bone of Carl's forehead with his knuckles, a rap accompanying each word of the sentence.

Carl could not endure it any longer. When he began to fear that his anger would get the best of him and that he might whirl about and strike his tormenter with the butt end of his gun, he began to cry and as he cried yelled out incontrollably, "You think I'm come from some low down gang, that's what's the matter."

"Never mind what I think," said the old soldier, betraying his cowardly respect for such apparent willfulness, "you just see that from now on you turn over a new leaf. You forget all about the gangs and

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put your past life out of your mind. This is a new life you're going to lead, understand!"

With an especially strong rap on the boy's forehead, he sent him back to his line, and soon after the visitors disappeared.

A dozen times that day, Carl was led out into the middle of the floor and drilled before the other boys, and each time he was dragged out he was forced to use his distorted and underdeveloped will-power to smother the growing desire to hit the old soldier upon the head.

A few moments rest, later in the afternoon, occasioned by an unexpected duty which the Major had been called upon to perform, gave Carl an opportunity to decide who his comrades were. There was something about most of them that repelled him. Their "don't do this and don't do that" were worse than the don'ts of school and the don'ts of his mother; but the fellow with the golden beaming face, saw things so differently from the way his comrades saw them that his remarks came home to Carl.

"Eh," began his novel deliberation, "the old-son-of-a-gun will drive at you no matter what you do. A club over his cocoanut would be the best thing you could do for him, but it wouldn't do you no good, that's the trouble there. Tell him to go to hell in your mind even if it ain't goin' to do you much good, and then do just what you can and let him do what he can. The old-son-of-a-gun will die some day, wait for that."

Carl thought of this many times that sleepless night as he lay on his bunk behind the wrought-iron door, attempting to drive off the horrors with which he was tormented.

He had fallen upon his bed with a prayer of hatred

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and revenge, grabbing a mouthful of blanket and biting into it with all his strength.

Often during the night, unable to lie still in his nervous fever, he raised his aching head and looked through the wrought-iron door into the dimly lit corridor till the sound of footsteps threw him back upon his bed, where he buried his head in his arms and cursed at the Major, distorting his face into expressions of raging beastliness.

Nothing could have been more remote from his mind than the thought that he was, himself, responsible for the condition he was in. He hugged his arms and the blanket with great madness and poured his heart out to the night.

Thoughts, impressions, and images of his earlier childhood with the spirit-like figure of Minnie pervading them all, came upon him and brought out the reluctant tears. His arms became uncomfortably wet and with a feeling of shame he wiped them with his blanket. He thought of every experience in his life and then in exhaustion fell asleep.

At midnight, he was awakened by the tread of heavy feet and the swinging light of a lantern. He rose from his strange bed, terrified. For a moment he was uncertain where he might be. He had lain on his right arm and it was now a lifeless appendage of clay. He was frightened out of his wits and began to rub with feverish speed till he brought life back into it. It made him think of death and old lady Valey's dead brother, and only his hatred for Mrs. Valey took him away from thoughts of the mangled body of her brother.

Again he looked about his cell as if he were not sure of his whereabouts.

"Yes," he told himself, "it's the reformatory." He sighed at the thought that he was locked up in a cell

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with bare green walls and a wrought-iron door, and for a long time he cried because of it; then, with a second ebbing of his strength, he sailed away in sleep again.

CHAPTER X.

"But why cry so, Matilda?" pleaded Anna when she came home from work, the night that Carl was sent away. "Really, I think he's better off. You don't want him to grow up a criminal, do you? They'll take care of him there."

"They'll torture and torment him there—my poor child," sobbed Matilda.

"Oh, nonsense, Matilda! Be reasonable! We don't torture any more. The dark ages have gone. People are studying all the time and find out the best ways of treating those boys so that they really reform them. Wait till you see what a good boy Carl will be when he gets out. He's a very good boy now, but—"

"But he's been motherless as well as fatherless," Matilda interrupted her, "and has grown up like a weed."

"You couldn't help that."

"Anna, I should never have had a child. Poor Carl! I wish I had sense enough to see things as clearly as he saw them. Poor Carl, that is just what he was afraid of. I was fool enough to think that such a thing could never happen to *my* child."

Anna helped her prepare supper and did all in her power to make Matilda more hopeful as they worked. After supper they washed the dishes, put them away and sat down in rockers facing each other to continue the discussion. Anna felt that she had entirely convinced Matilda that there was nothing to feel so very bad over, but Matilda, who had only lapsed into silence,

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broke out again as if Anna had never said a hopeful word.

"Oh, I deserved it all," she cried. "I've spent all these years making baby moccasins for other babies' feet, while my own baby went barefoot, finding his way as best he could. It's like as if I spent my years and strength seeing that other babies' feet are not cold and bruised, while my own baby's feet were bleeding and freezing."

"You couldn't help it, Matilda," said Anna, compassionately. "Why blame yourself, when you are not to blame. You might say it was a matter of either taking care of his little feet or feeding his stomach, and since he couldn't live at all without food and you couldn't do both, you did that which was most important."

"You should have heard what the judge had to say to me. I suppose I really shouldn't have had any children, but it isn't his business to tell me so."

The image of Carl's frightened little face staring wildly at the judge came into Matilda's mind and the tears once more began to trickle down her cheeks into the hand in which she rested her chin. She sighed deeply, from her very heart and muttered almost inaudibly, "Wonder what he's doing now?"

Anna tried to get Matilda to think of other things. She told her gleefully that she had succeeded in paying Denelli the ten dollars she owed him and that Denelli, very happy to see her, had made her promise that she would call upon him at any time that she was in need. She spoke of everything she thought might interest Matilda, but she might as well have talked to herself. Matilda had no opinions. When the hour grew very late, they retired. Anna was physically and mentally exhausted and soon fell asleep, but Matilda couldn't sleep. She tossed about, rolled from side to

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side, groaned heartrendingly every now and then, and wiped away the tears as fast as they came. In her imagination she followed her baby—having ceased to be a mother to him in his babyhood, he always remained a baby to her—from the mysterious little door in the court room to the more painfully mysterious reform school on the Island, into his cell as her stormrent mind pictured it. She was sure that he was struggling against sleeplessness even as she was. She was sure that he was afraid and lay writhing in terror. Certain that Anna was asleep, she rose, trod softly to the little bed that stood untouched, just as she had fixed it in the morning, fell upon her knees before it, buried her face in her naked arms and wept convulsively.

There and in the position Anna found her at six o'clock next morning, just as the bugle woke up her tired baby and the babies of many other weeping mothers, and babies who had no mothers to weep for them. The blow of the bugle had a peculiar effect upon Carl. The first moment of consciousness upon awaking echoed with its bell-like sounds and he had sensations of being in another world, a sort of dream world. When he was fully in possession of his faculties and while dressing himself with a rapidity only a voice as hated as that of the Major could stimulate, he gave himself over to hasty deliberation. It was as if he were just beginning to realize the awfulness of the calamity that had fallen upon him.

"What can I do? What shall I do?" he asked himself, his face wrinkling up with an expression of misery and despair. No answer came from anywhere. His own reason was as silent as the ugly green walls. "Can't do nothin'," said a little voice from within.

The breakfast he ate did not do its proportionate share of supplying his body with the nutriment it needed, not only because it was poor in itself, but be-

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cause that body had so long been in need—underfed. The food, however, was bearable to him and not much worse than that which his mother's toiling over baby moccasins had afforded him, and he ate as best he could, without giving it a thought. The desires that had been and were directly due to this semi-satisfaction, Carl did not trace to their sources, nor did those who were in charge of him. He was not given to tracing things to their sources any more than were they who considered themselves his "betters." That things were as they were was all that he knew and very often he had but a chaotic notion of that.

The subtle force that beckons, demands, and threatens the tree, the brute and the man prevailed upon Carl to endure, to be patient—to adjust himself to his environment so that he might be more apt to live; and Carl heeded—endured and acquired patience of his own kind—a sort of expediency based on hypocrisy and deceit.

Hardly a week had passed before Carl began to feel at home in the reformatory. The process of adjustment if it had not yet attained its perfection was well on the way. He learned to dread things less by expecting them. He learned to obey implicity when watched and, where possible, to get what was coming to him when not watched. When the Major, for instance, after a drill which heated him up, went off to get himself a "drink" and left a monitor in charge of the newcomers, and the monitor happened to be busy talking to a group of his intimates, Carl stole up to the corner where the Major's new coat hung over a bayonetted gun and pressed down upon the coat till the blunt bayonet pierced through to the other side, and with an additional twist made a rent some two or three inches long. When later the Major discovered the treachery and almost frothed at the mouth with

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anger, Carl, with the rest, denied the slightest knowledge of the accident. The more Major Dunkin raged, the more joy his raging gave Carl and though the little culprit's face was as serious and innocent looking as the face of any other boy in the room, he was fairly bubbling over with delight, and many a time in moments of great distress and anger, he soothed his soul with recollections of that incident.

By the middle of the second week, the regularity of Carl's life and the joy he took from his companionship with the golden-haired George had dulled the sharp edges of his original horror for the institution and he began to look with less agony upon the many weeks he would have to remain there. The strange law of reciprocity which makes one being select another from a whole group and desire to shower everything upon him and which makes that other being desire to reciprocate, brought Carl and George nearer together day by day and gave Carl the one thing he needed most—hope.

But whatever little joy he managed to find or however he sought to adjust himself and hoped, there constantly occurred trying events that fanned the flame of his hatred for those who ruled him.

He woke one morning bitter and repugnant after having spent half the night thinking of home, of what his life had been, and what he had to look forward to. The Major ordered a whole group of boys to go for a set of pails which were kept in a small room, opening upon the square, gloomy, gravel court yard. The gravel that covered that court yard was black and in its blackness was most bleak. The two sides away from the buildings were fenced in by a very high brick wall, age-stained and black too. Over the gloom of the court yard were dark gray clouds. The world which Carl had been thinking about and which he would have

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been glad to look towards, was shut off from view by the brick wall. He had followed the group slowly and quite meekly until they came into the yard, but there the dull sky filled him with a nameless longing, and he stopped a moment while the others filed into the little room to get their pails.

"Cut out that star-gazing," cried Major Dunkin angrily.

Carl had learned to submit and endure, but while learning that lesson his acquaintance with the things of his new environment had robbed him of some of his fear. He hated the old soldier. There was a sense of consoling satisfaction to him just then in refusing to obey him, and so, making believe that he had not heard him, he continued looking at the sky a moment and then turned to the closet to get his pail. Unfortunately for him his feelings seemed to show themselves in a faint sneer upon his face and the Major bit his lips. He ordered the others to stand aside and commanded Carl to drop his pail and return to where he had been standing, and when Carl had obeyed this order the Major ordered him at the signal of "three" to make a dash for the closet and get his pail.

"One, two, three!" shouted the Major.

Carl was horrified. The other youngsters stood in a semi-circle and watched. His legs were shaking under him, his heart beat madly and his cheeks fairly burned with the flush upon them. He listened to the counting as if every sound were the report of a gun aimed at him and when the "three" sang out into the court yard air, he was unable to budge. Again and again the Major repeated the counting, but as his anger grew, Carl's seethed into greater intensity and, finally turning about, the flush on his cheeks having gone and left them bloodless, he wanted to know why the Major selected him for such groundless persecution.

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The Major replied with his knuckles, drawing a stream of blood from Carl's nose, and a fiendish animal howl from the youngsters in the semi-circle.

The life Carl had led had taught him in spite of his weakness to hold his own as far as that was possible, and, as much out of habit as out of rage, he flew at Major Dunkin's throat. But it was not a well matched fight. Added to his bloody nose, he now had a black eye, and found himself in an iron grip.

Colonel Mohtin appeared and led him away.

They passed door after door before each of which the Colonel's bunch of keys jingled ominously, and came to a lonely little corridor where the Colonel stopped before inserting his key and took a furtive, emotionless glance at his victim's eye.

Carl was beside himself with fear. He was ushered into a very tiny room with a very high ceiling, near which in one of the walls was a lone small window. The room was semi-dark and a queer odor pervaded it. A bench or bunk consisting of two or three boards was nailed to the wall that had the window in it. There was nothing else in the cell.

The Colonel followed him in, locked the door behind him, sat down on the bench, and, with his lifeless face ghost-like in the gray light, slowly pulled off the glove from his right hand. All this time he did not utter a sound, nor was there need for doing so. The lifeless expression on his face, his terrible gaze, and the slow, ominous movement of his hand were sufficiently clear.

Carl lost his nerve. He began to beg for mercy—there was no one about to witness his begging. He begged eloquently, and, with a snicker on his face, the Colonel rose, replaced his glove and repeating Carl's words, muttered, "You'll behave all right," and left, locking the door behind him.

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The first thing Carl did when left alone was to look about the tiny room to see whether it was possible for any one to look in from anywhere. The door was a steel one and the keyhole did not go through. The window above him, unreasonably high, was partly open but had nothing but sky beyond it.

He was possessed with the fear that his nose, which had stopped bleeding upon the application of cold water, might begin to bleed again, as it often had done, and that he might bleed to death there unable to call for any one's assistance, and though his fear waned considerable when after several minutes there were no drops of blood coming, he stretched himself on his back on the hard wooden bunk and decided to lay still in that position for as long as he could stand it, to make sure.

His eye began to smart very painfully. He could almost feel it swell, but there was a sense of satisfaction connected with the idea that the Major had been unable to make him obey. He regretted having humiliated himself before Colonel Mohtin, but consoled himself with the thought that he had fooled the Colonel into believing that he was repentant. But as he lay there through the slow passing moments, and what satisfaction he had given himself wore out, a spell of infinite bitterness began to grow upon him till there was hardly a thing in all the universe that did not in his mad thoughts deserve his hatred—Colonel Mohtin, his mother, Anna and even little Minnie. Minnie, he told himself, had probably fallen into line with all the rest that had condemned him.

When he felt assured that his nose was not going to bleed any more he sat up for awhile. His first attempt to sit up was followed by a dizziness that took the light out of his eyes for a moment and that worried him. His eye pained him, but he had had "black"

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eyes before. He felt very weak and stood up to stretch and bring about a better circulation of his blood. The hatred he entertained against his enemies inspired an idea. He would exercise and grow strong. He told himself that he hoped they would keep him there a long time so he could do enough exercise to grow visibly stronger.

He stretched in every direction, clenching his fists with all his strength. Then he took off his shoes and for fully fifteen minutes jumped off and on his bunk. Then he began a running motion, standing in one place and running very rapidly. He performed over and over again every exercise that he had learned in school, and then becoming tired of exercising, he stopped, seated himself upon his bunk and rested his head on his left hand.

At noon the hateful Major brought him two jelly sandwiches and a tin cup full of a watery milk and lectured him on obedience and the penalties for disobedience. When the Major was gone, Carl spent five minutes in making grimaces at the imaginary presence of the Major and then fell to his lunch, appreciating the break in his monotony that it offered.

Immediately after his meal he stretched out on his bunk. But he was too restless to be able to remain in that position long. He jumped off and began his exercising again. Then he sat down and began to think. The problem before him was what he might do to pass the time away, and sitting and thinking was not a satisfactory way of doing so. He started up once more and tried walking to and fro, but the floor space was too small, the turning dizzied him. He stood himself against the wall and stretched his hands as far up as they could go and stretched with such stress that the opposite wall with its windows began to sink before him and he sat down again.

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He began to figure out the time he would have to serve in the institution, having got the necessary facts from other boys, and ascertained whether it would fall in summer or winter. The length of time yet before him overwhelmed him and he thought of escaping. He remembered hearing of the accomplishment of such things and remembered seeing very daring escapes made on moving-picture screens. But the escapes that had seemed compartively easy on the screens not only seemed too hazardous to him then, but well-nigh impossible.

He grew tired thinking and, standing up, took the few steps to his door and falling upon it with outstretched hands, sank to his knees on the floor and mutely prayed to the powers of life. That soon wearied him and he returned to his bunk, stretched out upon it, again jumped up and cried for sheer exasperation. Nothing to do.

Once more he went through all his exercise, with his pertinacious desire to grow strong overcoming the growing distaste for those exercises. He sat down again and made the most frightful grimaces he could think of till he could see those grimaces in his imagination and became afraid of them.

He jumped upon his bunk and, stretching his hands, tried to reach as near the window as possible, but his hand went no further than within half a yard of the window. An impulse seized him to tear up the boards of the bunk and to place them against the wall so that by climbing them he could look out of the window. For half an hour he tugged at those boards in vain. By the time he concluded that it was impossible for him to move them, he was very weary and stretched out again. He had not slept much the night before and hoped to be able to sleep then, but farther than a doze the desire to sleep would not take him. He lay in this

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semi-conscious state for a long time touching vaguely upon all the dreams of his life floating off in a sea of sadness that was more than his own—that had been fed by rivers flowing from other lives.

The feeling of waning afternoon entered that little dungeon. When he had rid himself of his stupor and stretched again, rubbing one eye hard and the other more tenderly, he sank upon the floor against his door and, embracing his knees with his arms, dropped his head upon them. But before long he was again standing on his bunk, attempting to climb the smooth wall with earnest effort as if he were mad. He returned to his seat on the floor with his back against the iron door, and as he sat there looked up and discovered that the bit of sky visible through the window was interesting. It was now all blue and just as he was about to give up staring at it, a soft white cloud sailed in upon the small patch and the joy the sight gave him made him laugh. This was his moving-picture theatre, he told himself, and sat a long time watching the wonderful pictures as they moved across the screen. Tiring of imagining the cloud shapes to be persons and objects, he began to wonder what clouds were. His desire was so great that before the Major appeared it took a great deal of his will-power to keep himself from deciding to ask him for that information, but the turning of the key in the keyhole brought back all his hatred to him.

He ate his supper slowly, chewing carefully and thinking as he chewed that the longer he protracted that necessary duty the less time would he have to fill, and when through with that, began once more his program of activities, ending it by sitting down against the door watching for the appearance of stars on his moving-picture screen, but the waiting was long and fruitless, the city lights driving off the stars even as

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the city life had driven off those brighter influences that might have prevented the occurrences that led to this unhappy confinement. He rose once more and stretched his arms in a vain, unuttered appeal to the God of Life who was unknown to him. Was there nothing amid all the million things that flew about in his brain whose aid he might invoke?

There was no answer. The unendurable silence mocked his ruffian prayers and he grabbed the enameled saucer in which his supper had been brought and hurled it with all his might against the door. He had broken that mocking silence with sounds that vibrated through the gloomy corridor without his cell and through the gloomy corridors of his soul. But the silence pitilessly settled down again—no one came to investigate—no one cared what he did with himself there.

He picked up the saucer and, by the fading light, saw many black spots upon it, where the enamel had been broken off, and tried to dirty up the spots so they won't look newly made.

It grew dark and the darkness brought with it greater misery. His little vault was like a tomb and he began to realize that Colonel Mohtin's punishment was much more severe than he had thought it was going to be, and a sinking feeling in his heart told him that Major Dunkin had got the best of him and that all his boasting to himself had been groundless. The darkness and the enclosure were grave-like and he thought of himself as having been buried alive, then sought with might and main to drive the thought from his mind, and failed. Again and again he heard in his soul the ghostly little questions, "Is this the way you feel in a grave?" Everything else he thought of seemed to lead him back to that. He thought of his father of whom he remembered nothing but a faint

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outline, and that he probably got from listening to his mother's tales of him. But his father was a synonym for death, and he tried, with tears in his eyes, not to think of him. Thoughts of his mother had little consolation to offer. She had ever since he could remember worn black and associated with the black was the darkness of the grave again. Nor did his attempt to arouse his enmity towards Mrs. Varley prove any more successful, for as soon as she came into his mind he thought of her back-room, the night he had attempted to spend there, and the wailing recital of her brother's death. He saw again the blood-stained forehead and the body the woman loved so much under a whole heap of dead men, terribly mangled dead men. He tried to escape that, but that was by far the worst impression that had ever been made upon him and again and again the forehead of that portrait as he had imagined it with a hole through it, and with its eyes closed in agony, glided in and out of his consciousness, spectre-like.

The kindest image was that of Minnie. Whole seas of soft colors poured from the memories of her plaid and checkered dresses and the ribbons she had worn. The memory of the touch of her soft warm neck or the interweaving of his fingers and hers was like that of a lost happiness to one who was certain that he could never be happy again.

Several times during the very long night he attempted to bring sleep upon himself, but always the spectre of Mrs. Valey's mutilated brother came back to torture him and he cursed the day that had brought him into Mrs. Valey's candy-store.

The wooden bunk was an impossible bed. His black eye seemed to have resumed its swelling. It smarted annoyingly and he felt a dull pain setting in. Suddenly it occurred to him that the swollen eye was

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like a hole in his head, and he began to rub the eye gently as if to prove to himself that there was no hole there.

He cried. If he could only lay his hands on that Major Dunkin, he would pay him for all the agony he was enduring. He wished he were strong. He hoped that he would become a prize-fighter. The thought of waiting near the reformatory some dark night for the appearance of the Major on his way home, the sensations of striking him in rapid and telling successions, relieved his horror. How he would pound him! There were others he would pound; and he gave himself great pleasure by imagining in detail the same process and the same success with each and every one of them.

But sleep would not come. Again the spectre of Mrs. Valey's brother stole into his cell. Each time it came some gruesome detail came with it. The whole heap of dead soldiers under which the handsome brother had fallen arose and walked into his little dungeon. As if that weren't enough, dead animals, red bloody bodies with the skin partly torn off, as he had seen them at Jim Daniel's butcher shop, joined the ghastly procession, and everywhere headless chickens flopped their wings and danced about in the room. He crouched into his corner and cried.

There came a time that night when he had all he could do to keep himself from rushing against his door and howling for mercy. He began to feel that rather than endure another such a night he would fall on his knees before the horrible Major and beg for forgiveness; but when the beloved daylight appeared and dawn, mother-like, drove off all the spectres, he bit his lips and clenched his fists, hated his oppressors with a greater hatred and swore with all the venom in his little soul a greater vengeance.

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The second night in the dungeon was almost as horrible as the first had been, but if nothing else consoled him, the thought that he had lived through the first night did, and though he slept but little more, he felt himself stronger and took pride in an aroused contempt for his prosecutors, born with the assurances of the second coming and the second retreat of the darkness and its shadowy horrors.

On the fourth day, he was released and, much to his gratification, instead of sending him back into the charge of Major Dunkin, they assigned him to new quarters as one of the regulars.

Whether Carl would have admitted that fact or not, for some time and to some extent, the purpose of his punishment seemed to have been accomplished. He became much more careful than he had ever been about his conduct, avoiding those acts or expressions that might lead back to the dungeon, accepting what he considered as indignities with no less a desire to fight back but with a great desire to avoid punishment.

He was somewhat afraid of the other boys at first, and for some time felt very much out of place among them. It had not yet dawned upon him that they were his fellow sufferers. He thought of them only in so far as they affected him. It had always been a matter of holding his own against everybody, even against his friends. Even Jimmie had had to be watched, for Jimmie had been as anxious concerning Jimmie, as Carl had had to be concerning Carl. A friend to Carl was not one who was always with him, but rather one who was not always against him; one who could be induced to pull with him against the rest of the world that always pulled away, in the unending tug of war.

The weeks went by and Carl became accustomed to everything. Even the mopping of floors had become a thing, if never pleasant, at least not to be feared or

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dreaded. That beaten feeling, that stolidity or stupidity expressed on the faces of almost all of the other boys about him, was beginning to grow upon him, too. Colonel Mohtin had little to do with him and was quite satisfied with the blush of fear that crept into his pale face whenever he spoke to Carl.

Matilda and Anna, his mother in particular, proved themselves to be his only stand-by. No other friends ever came to see him, and he expected none. Matilda came as often as she could and sometimes brought him what little delicacies she could afford, and his heart was always too full properly to thank her for them.

The golden-haired, good-natured George, who had subtly made his way into the heart of this little outcast the very first day they had met, like a seed that is driven by the wind to a spot of good soil, where it sinks and commences to grow, grew more firmly rooted each time he centered his attention upon the "gloomy little devil," for whom none of the other boys seemed to care. To be sure, even that attention was received with the touch of distrustfulness that Carl's experience would not allow him to dispense with, but as if the almost care-free George had been working towards that end, he unconsciously reduced it to a minimum, and drove it into the depths and out of sight.

More than a month had gone by since Carl had begun to forget all about the Major. A large group of boys were engaged in tearing down a small, brick outhouse, annexed to a corner of the main building. The biggest boys were on the wall tearing down the brick and the smaller boys, among whom were both Carl and George, carried the bricks from where they fell to a heap at the other end of the gloomy court yard.

It was one of those days when the burden of his condition weighed most heavily upon the unhappy

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Carl. He had not slept very much the night before, and the food he had eaten had not agreed with him. He had been too gloomy to speak to George save for a word here and there and that in an unfriendly tone. As the day wore on and the carrying of heavy loads of brick added to his indisposition, he grew more and more irritable.

"What the devil is the matter with you?" demanded George while both of them were loading themselves with brick, and after he had for the third time asked him to look at some fellow that was very amusing to him.

"Nothin's the matter," replied Carl; but he had no sooner spoken than one of the fellows on the heap with them stepped right in front of him and almost on top of him.

It was the last straw. Carl's irritation had reached a climax. With one angry shove he threw the fellow down the pile. He didn't mean to throw him down and bruise him, he merely wanted to get him away from himself, and was somewhat alarmed when the fellow rose screaming and rubbing an arm and a leg at the same time.

The Colonel, who was superintending the job, approached the group of boys on the pile of bricks and turning to Carl, demanded, "Did you do it?"

"No sir," said George. Carl said nothing, and the Colonel looked at George.

"Then you did it?"

"He stood right in front of us," said George; "he could get his bricks over there just as well."

"Come with me," said the Colonel, and when he had George off in the hallway, stopped a moment and, turning to him said deliberately, "I know you didn't do it. You were lying to me, weren't you?"

"No sir," cried George, "I was not lying."

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"You are lying now. If you don't tell me the truth, I'll put you in the 'coop'!"

George gazed down on the floor without replying.

"And I'll give you a good beatin' besides," added the Colonel.

George was firm. "I did tell the truth."

"You are not only lying, but you are conspiring. You're interfering with my discipline; come with me."

The Colonel led him down into the gloomy little corridor, and opening the door of one of the coops sent him into the cell.

Carl was frightfully worried and very repentant. He had got his friend into trouble, and he now felt towards George as he had never felt towards any one. He carried his bricks very docilely, mournfully eulogizing his friend to himself, until the Colonel appeared and called him.

"You pushed the boy over, didn't you?" the Colonel asked him.

"Yes, sir," said Carl, disappointed.

"All right, you told me the truth. I shall only punish you by giving you a report. Is that fellow a friend of yours?"

"No, sir," cried Carl.

"Well, why did he lie to save you from getting punished?"

"I don't know."

"See, you told the truth and you got off easy. He still says he did it, even after I told him that I knew you did it. I put him into the 'coop' and he's going to stay there and get a beatin' every day till he tells me the truth. See."

"Well, we both did it."

"So you're lying too, to save him, hey? Just a minute. Let's get it straight."

The Colonel grabbed the boy by the shoulder and,

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dragging him back to the doorway, shouted back into the yard, "Martin, come here."

Martin's face was covered with perspiration and dust. He came up on a run, for he knew the Colonel well, and with an extremely anxious expression on his face, awaited the Colonel's wishes.

"You were back of this boy and Brown when Thorne was thrown over the bricks. You saw who did it. Tell me."

"No sir," cried Martin with a great show of nervousness, "I—I was bent over pickin' up some bricks."

"Are you lyin', too?" demanded the Colonel.

"No sir," cried Martin, looking at him appealingly.

"You are to go out soon, Martin. Do you want me to give you a report and keep you here a couple of weeks longer?"

"No, sir."

"Then tell the truth, and I won't wait very long for it either."

Martin looked up at Carl.

"Did Brown do any pushing?"

"No, sir."

"How do you know?" demanded Carl, furiously.

"I saw you do it."

The two boys exchanged fiery glances. Martin was sent back with an injunction to the effect that the next time he hesitated in telling the truth, his hesitation would be taken for an attempt to lie; and Carl went back to his own cell in the dungeon.

For some unaccountable reason, Carl did not mind this incarceration. In fact he enjoyed the idea of being alone; it relieved him from the constant and nerve-wrecking vigilance. He smiled to himself as if he had got off easy, and made grimaces for the benefit of Colonel Mohtin, then he began to call to George in the hope of getting into communication with him.

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His efforts to communicate with George were futile. There was no response, and Carl gave up trying and sat down against the door to look out of his window at the sky. He had worked hard that day and was really glad to get a chance to sit down, and again he laughed heartily with the thought that he had got the best of them.

Toward supper time, he stretched out upon his bunk and fell asleep, sleeping till one of the guards came and brought him supper. The opening of the door brought him out of his deep sleep and momentarily into a doze. When the man entered, Carl sat up on his bunk with great excitement. He had been dreaming terrible dreams. The first thing that came upon his wakening mind was the dread of having to spend the night there, and despite his efforts to control himself, he cried.

"What's the matter, Billy?" asked the guard.

The man's tone of voice was so unexpectedly kind and took him so much by surprise that he couldn't answer him. A lump arose in his throat. He would fling himself at the mercy of this man, the only kind-voiced man in the place, but he couldn't speak.

"What are you cryin' about, Billy?" the guard inquired again. "Are you sick?"

Again Carl wished to tell him and again the lump in his throat made him speechless.

"Here, take this and don't tell anybody I gave it to you," said the guard, handing him a piece of gum, and before Carl could answer with his sobbing "no" the guard had disappeared and locked the door behind him.

Carl couldn't eat his supper. He gulped down the watery milk and shoving the piece of gum into his mouth sat down on the floor again with his back against the door and began a rapid chewing which lasted till

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his jaws ached, sitting all the while like one in a trance, his eyes flooded with big tears.

He stopped chewing and began to think—to dream. George figured in those dreams and everybody else that he knew, but above them all was the figure of this new guard whom he had never seen, who like a godly creature bore emancipation in his hand.

But the evening was spent and the night lowered unmercifully heavy. He was afraid of the night and afraid of the creatures of his brain that had tortured him during the nights of his other confinement; and by being afraid he forced them to come upon him.

He began chewing again rapidly and as he chewed his eyes as well as his jaws grew heavy and he fell asleep.

Next morning they were agreeably surprised. The same guard appeared and, taking them out of their cells, brought them into the courtyard and ordered them to help in the removing of the brick pile. Carl was sure that he was responsible for their release, but had no way of verifying his belief. He saw him several times about the institution and then there came a time when he saw him no more.

CHAPTER XI.

The entire month of June with all its sunshine and blue skies, with all the thousand things of nature designed to stimulate happiness in all living things, was one long, dreary, rainy day to Carl.

In the first decade of Carl's boyhood, he had adjusted himself to a hostile environment, by fighting back. At the reformatory all his notions so painfully acquired by his boyhood's experience had to be cast aside, and in order that he might bear it all and live

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he was obliged to weave for himself out of the newer, and more horrible experiences a new philosophy. Had he been able to, as he lay awake nights, or scrubbed his floors with the tears dropping down into the wet rags, or as he peeled potatoes, his eyes growing dim with the sameness of his work, had he been able to deduce this new philosophy with the ease with which he had deduced his former codes, he would have found his way with less wretchedness, less hatred, and less desire for revenge. The experiences of this new world were not only more horrible, more painful, but they came to a little mind no more ready to accept the new as if by the nature of things it had to be; but came to an already organized mentality and came with violent attacks, with never a word of explanation, with no excuses or reasons, but always by virtue of the iron heel that backed them. "Obey, not because it is right; obey, not because it is just; but obey, because you must, because the ruling powers have you in their iron grip and can force you to obey." These were the echoes that sounded through the hallways, never waning in strength, always harsh and brutal, always meeting aversion and always conquering.

Yet Carl strove as desperately as ever to adjust himself, his nerves raw with the bruises constantly inflicted upon them. Waking early with a sour taste in his mouth, he went through day after day of sickening, sapping marches, to his meals and from them, to this job and from it, to that job and from that, marching, marching, marching—ever in a vise—ever tense—never free. It was never a matter of "find out" when you don't know; but the air was filled with injunctions, "don't reveal the fact that you didn't understand, for, lack of comprehension meant inattention, and inattention was a deliberate, purposive crime, severely punishable," and so it was half the time Carl did

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not understand and half the time he did not learn, and all the time he was paying some penalty.

Even the good-natured George was slowly losing his good nature, and the round, robust cheeks were tingeing with yellow, and into the laughing boyish eyes there stole tears at night, which left the stain of tears, visible even under smiles or sneers or hearty laughter.

In spite of rules and regulations, in spite of vigilances and injunctions, in spite of bitterness and hatred, the two boys grew together. George's mother was more able to bring him good things, and Carl's mother brought more hope and consolation, and George accepted his share of the dividing up with as much willingness as Carl accepted what cake and candy George gave him.

There is something in the nature of things, perhaps it is a tendency inherent in the soul of the race, that often so favors the under-dog, that, in spite of the strength and vigilance of those who rule them by might, the under-dog will get the better of his oppressor. And so it was that, in spite of their watchfulness, in spite of the careful segregation, in spite of the many bars erected between them, George and Carl built new bridges as fast as the old were destroyed—made plans for escape and succeeded—succeeded in escaping long enough to get another lesson from life, to get a little more of the joy they craved, and to make another league in the direction of their allotted doom. They felt that every man is a doomed man. Doom never worried them. They were only concerned with what they could get out of life as they made for doom.

It was a lovely evening in the early part of July. Carl and George were together in the kitchen helping the squad that had been assigned to cleaning up the mess made in the preparations of supper. They had planned their escape for weeks before and it was al-

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ready three days since George had dropped two bundles over the wall, about which they had as yet heard nothing. Every one was busily at work when both of them, grabbing a tubful of waste matter, carried it towards the door as if it were exactly what had been expected of them. No one paid any attention to them, and when they reached the deserted court yard they lowered the tub cautiously and hurried in the descending darkness to a point in the wall that was scaleable and made the other side. There was not a sign of either of the two bundles, nor did they stop very long to search for them. They started on a run for the river side. Just as they came upon a pile of lumber they heard a whispering from somewhere behind them and, falling upon their knees, climbed into a space under the lumber and between that and the wall and there crouched down, breathlessly awaiting whatever fate had in store for them.

There was a grinding of heavy feet coming from the direction of the part of the wall which they had scaled and by the sound they knew that two men were searching for them.

"I told you to watch them kids," said one voice low and horrible when the hunters were near them.

"Well, didn't I watch 'em?" said a second gruff voice.

They carried a lantern which the bearer swung backward and forward as he hurried along, and the sound of their big shoes was heard above the conglomeration of river sounds and city sounds that filled the moonless night.

Without noticing the lumber pile, the lantern-bearer stated the opinion that "they couldn't have gone this way" and, to the boys' relief, started off in the opposite direction.

A dozen times, George crawled out on hands and

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feet to see whether the field was clear, and as many times something sent him back in a hurry. Finally, when the deepening night had silenced most of the noisy activities and their cramped positions under the lumber became unbearable, they crawled out and started for the river side, where they had seen a boat from one of the windows of the institution.

The boat was there as they had seen it and on the small wooden float to which it was tied they found the oars.

The boat had quite a little water in it, but they didn't stop to bail it out. Instructing Carl to row noiselessly, George handed him one of the oars, and getting into the boat they rowed away as fast as they could row, passing other boats of every size and description but keeping as far away from them as possible.

The force of the stream was southward and it took all the strength they possessed to make any headway at all, but they kept moving and gained in courage as they gained in distance.

They exchanged few words. Only when instruction was absolutely necessary did they whisper to each other . . . pull on your right . . . don't splash so , , , left, left . . . a tug's coming, let's get to the right of it . . . more room on the right.

They were making for a woody point several miles north. George had studied it carefully every time he had been left to scrub the hallway floor on the third story of the reformatory, and they were now heading straight for it.

After several hours of panting and puffing, rowing against odds, they neared the woody point only to find it part of an island from which escape would be impossible. Turning immediately they began to circle about it. At the northern end of the island they saw

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in the night black shadows like walls and, fearing it to be a prison, began to row away from it as fast as they could, and when nearer the other shore turned up again and, after taking a few deep breaths, went on rowing till the fearful shore receded behind them. Never in all their lives before had they been so tired and so near exhaustion, but need and fear conquered the pain in their arms and drove the little boat steadily north till they came upon another woody point, much more desolate than the first.

For the first time they broke out into excited conversation. There seemed to be nothing, absolutely nothing to be afraid of, and so they spoke their joy hilariously. When they were near enough to the point to see what was on it they saw an ominous-looking building and began to row back to the middle of the river again. There they made out another strip of woodland in the distance and headed for that.

When clear of the house they had avoided they began to talk again and were happily engaged in making plans, when the "puff, puff" of a motor boat was heard in the great distance behind them.

George stopped rowing to listen. For some reason or other it sounded like the motor boat kept on the Island, or at least for some reason he thought it sounded like it, and Carl alarmed by his silence demanded several times the reason for his listening.

"It sounds to me like the boat they have. Think you can swim to that black—woods—over there?"

"If we can get a little nearer, I can," said Carl, trembling as he spoke.

They rowed faster than ever and then George turned to him again, "Think you c'n swim it now?"

"I think I can."

"See, Collie," said George nervously, "we can't take this thing to shore or they'll be able to find us.

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We got to turn this upside down and let it float back with the river, see. Throw your coat off. You can swim better. They'll think we drowned—I'll turn this thing over. You better jump, Collie, if it's them, they're pretty near us. Go 'head, Collie. Don't get excited. We'll make it all right. Take it easy."

Carl wished to show his companion that he was worthy of him. He swallowed his fear, subdued his excitement, and, throwing his coat way out towards the river's center, he jumped over and began to swim for the shore. When Carl was far enough away. George threw off his coat and followed him.

Poor Carl! The distance had seemed shorter to him than it really was. He struggled like a man and kept up his courage, but his arms were already weak from rowing, and a queer sensation of dizziness, a sort of desire to give up worked terribly against him. He seemed to find it so hard to move himself off. He seemed to be struggling on one spot. He did not dare attempt to turn back to look for his friend and every once in awhile a bit of water entered his nostrils or his mouth, sometimes going down to his lungs and making them pain when he struggled to breathe. The struggle became too great for him, he felt himself giving way. That sleepy feeling, that great overpowering desire for rest that precedes death came over him, and as if he recognized it, he struggled against it—he threw his arms madly and kicked his feet wildly.

Suddenly he heard the reassuring voice of George, splashing up to him, spitting out streams of water as he spoke. "Don't get excited, Collie, we're almost there now."

There was never deeper love throughout eternity than that which flashed through the sinking mind of poor Collie at sound of his companion's voice. He was sinking. The great force was driving him down,

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and in the last struggle he was trying to reach his friend. He tried to call to him, but as he opened his mouth it filled with water.

"You're all right, Collie," sputtered George. "Keep it up."

But Collie was not all right. George saw that he was not all right and, in great alarm, gathering superhuman strength, he struck for him, and cried, "Throw your hands forward and float."

George was an excellent swimmer, having gone to a gymnasium for several years, but he was exhausted. With great will power, making believe that his aching muscles were not aching, urging that belief upon himself, he grabbed Carl by the collar and swam, pulling him along.

Carl collected himself a bit and what strength he could muster turned over on his back.

Many a moment in the years that followed this dreadful night, George stopped whatever he happened to be doing and with an expression on his face like that of an idiot, lower jaw dropped, recalled the last few moments of this awful struggle for life and wondered how he ever reached the shore.

Coughing, choking, spitting, they dropped upon the beloved earth and breathed deep, uncontrolled breaths, unable to utter a word. When George had regained enough of his strength to get up he found Carl stretched out flat on his face and falling upon his knees began to rub his companion's limbs.

Struggling to get his breath and choking with the attempt to speak, Carl assured him that he was all right and George stretched out beside him.

But they couldn't lay that way very long. They were wet and cold and aching in every muscle. Gray dawn was perceptibly breaking upon the bit of woods

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that sheltered them, and, urged by the fear of pursuit, they started for the depths of the woods.

They found a path. George led and Carl followed him silently. Before long full daylight was upon them. They came upon an open, grassy field and crossing it came again to a stretch of woods.

Carl wanted to sit down, but George urged him to walk on. It was better for him, he told him, and without a word to say, still struggling with his breath, Carl stumbled on after him. They came to another open space and by that time the sun was up high and warm. They sat down upon a huge stone and George tried to console his companion whose spirits had well-nigh reached their lowest depths. The sun rose higher and dried the grass and made them feel more comfortable. Stretching upon the ground they fell asleep.

It was nearly mid-day before either one of them awakened. George woke first. He started up and looked about. A lovely silence pervaded the enclosure and the sunshine was delightfully hot. The side he was sleeping on was still very wet and the muscles and bones pained from having pressed against the earth. George decided to turn over and woke Carl, suggesting that he do the same and once more they succumbed to sleep.

It was early afternoon when George woke a second time and hungry and aching in every limb, he aroused his companion and they started in quest of something to eat.

After a great deal of climbing and going down hill, making their way through thickets, and discussing their escape in every detail, they came to the top of a high hill, from where they could see way down before and below them, a group of men at work on a road, and a considerable distance from them and nearer to

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where they were, the boys saw the black heap of the men's clothes.

Instructing Carl to keep careful watch and to whistle should any one appear, George made for the heap of clothes. He selected a cap and coat for each and seeing a half eaten lunch took that too, then, after carefully looking about himself, hurried back to where Carl was anxiously waiting for him.

They divided their spoils and started on a run through the woods, going way off to the right so as to avoid meeting any of the men, devouring the half eaten lunch as they ran, till they came to a trolley line.

With the strange coats folded up and the best caps George had been able to find they looked quite respectable. An open trolley car came along and taking a secluded seat, there were few passengers on the car, George pulled out his rusty pocket knife and ripped open the pocket into which he had sewed the money he was given by a friend on the previous Sunday.

"How much you got?" whispered Carl.

"I got six dollars," replied George with a grin.

"Gee!" cried Carl, "I didn't know you had all that."

The conductor came along, took the dollar bill George handed him, gave them the necessary change, looked at them suspiciously, and went back to the rear of the car.

The trolley whirled on through interesting scenery, woods, farms, and villages, while they in very good spirits, discussed all manner of possibilities, laughed hilariously at the institution officials and repeated the dialogue they had heard when they were crouched underneath the pile of lumber.

"I told you to watch them kids," said George mockingly.

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"Well, didn't I watch 'em," replied Carl, roaring with laughter.

They paid a second and a third fare and some time after that came to a small village where all were ordered out.

There they found another trolly car about to start out on a trip still further north and instantly boarded that. The late afternoon and the speed of the trolley brought sleep back to them and three times the conductor woke them demanding their fare. They came to another small village where again they were ordered out. The car stopped at a car barn near which they saw a small store where provisions were sold to railroad employees. George walked into the store, while Carl, his strange coat still folded on his arm, stood outside waiting for him, very much annoyed by people who persisted in staring at him.

George soon appeared with a large bundle under his arm and they took the first road going north that they came upon, anxious to leave the village behind them.

They opened a bag of cakes as soon as they were alone on the road and devouring them as they walked, they complained to each other of sore feet; but the feeling of evening that had lowered over the lovely landscape had a quieting effect even upon them who were afraid of the night, and the steady walking became less painful. The lowered sun was not so hot and the drowsy feeling that had had possession of them on the trolley car left them as they walked. They came upon a deep woods towards the right of them, and leaving the road discovered a small open space where they could see by the many heaps of ashes, that camp fires had been built. At first they decided to remain there, build a camp fire and finish their meal, but upon deliberation concluded that, since so many

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people had found that a good spot for camping, some one of them might return, and so went back to the road and falling into a steady pace again, they devoured all their provisions as they walked.

Evening approached and the prospect of staying out all night and the fear of running up against something or some one that might prove disagreeable, cast shadows upon them longer than those the dying sun was casting upon the open landscape; but they were not unhappy.

The darker it got the more weary they became. Both of them were considerably discouraged, but each one fearing the discouragement of the other, tried to console him.

They decided that seeking a bed was inadvisable because of their suspicious appearance and began looking about for a good place to spend the night. It was already very dark when they came upon a road that branched off from the road they had been walking on, and that looked neglected, showing that few people used it. George explained why it would be best for them to take it, and though it ran into a very gloomy woods, they did take it.

Half a mile from the main road they came upon a house in the midst of construction. Lumber, boards, steadings, laths and shingles lay in piles about it and its porch was yet without a floor. Carl remained on the road while George entered the half built house to investigate. After calling, "Hello there," several times without getting a reply, he asked Carl to follow him. They made their way cautiously over the littered floors calling out as they went, welcoming and dreading the hollow echoes that came back.

With a cry of delight, George announced that his searching hands had come upon a box of matches. Lighting a number of them they were able to examine

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the place. They found a ladder leading to the upper story only half of the floor of which was as yet nailed down. There was no place on the ground floor where they felt they could sleep, so they climbed up the ladder. On the half finished floor near a huge tool chest they found a heap of empty cement bags. These they spread out like bedding and on them stretched out for the night.

Advising Carl with brotherly concern not to worry and to try to sleep, George huddled into him and tried himself to follow that advice.

CHAPTER XII.

When early morning came upon the roadway, the cluster of trees and the unfinished house and the sun lit the golden blood in the newly cut boards, the boys were awakened by a shriek like that of a mad man and George started from his hard bed in time to see a red head disappear down the ladder. Both boys jumped to their feet. Down below they heard a racket as if a dozen men were falling all over each other in the attempt to get at the ladder and without waiting for their appearance they made for the window. Luckily the scaffolding was still intact and dropping from cross board to cross board they reached the ground and ran for dear life.

"Darned old farmers," cried George when they had stopped running and halted to pick some of the bits of steading that their hasty flight had driven into their hands and fingers.

"Darned old farmers," repeated Carl, working with teeth and nails trying to get out some of the splinters that were paining him deep in his own hands.

"Mean devils aren't they?" commented George.

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"Let's go back and fire a couple stones at 'em," suggested Carl, whose anger had been aroused by the inability to get the splinters out of his hands, "I'd like to do it."

"Oh, no," said George. "We don't want to get into any trouble now. The devil take the old fools we had a good night's sleep there anyway."

They came back to the main road which they had followed the night before and turning to the right went north again till they reached another small village. It was still very early. Few people were about on the one long street, and some of the stores were yet closed. They had decided while en route to this village to spend their money in getting clothes and then, looking less suspicious, to seek work. The first dry goods store they approached displayed the very things they wanted. The storekeeper had just opened up his store. They entered and met him coming from the back with a broom in his hands, and waited for him.

He was a typical country storekeeper, save that there was a meaner expression on his face than that of the usual country storekeeper. He nodded with painful indifference and went about his work as if they had not been there at all. They waited patiently till he was through sweeping the walk, he stopped to stare at something that was taking place across the street and started a conversation with a pedestrian that was about to pass him with a loud good morning.

"What does the damned farmer think, we are?" said George under his breath. "Come on Collie. Let's go."

But the country storekeeper then re-entered his store, looked them over suspiciously, and inquired for their wishes.

When informed he led them back to the rear and began pulling out a great many pairs of khaki trousers.

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"How much are they?" asked George, trying on a pair.

Carl also tried on a pair, and George asked once more for prices.

Without replying the storekeeper walked off again and came back with a number of coats of the same material. When they had found a coat each that fit them, they asked again for prices, but again the storekeeper ignored the question and this time he produced a large round box full of caps.

"The darn hayseed's deaf," whispered George to Carl, then turning to the storekeeper asked for the prices again in a much louder voice.

"Put 'em on an' see if they fit you first," he replied at last. "They won't be any cheaper if I tell you now."

"Something's wrong," thought George to himself, and Carl eyed the fellow's every move.

When they had found the required sizes in everything they wanted George to put his question once more.

"A dollar each for shirts and pants and fifty cents for the caps," he replied this time, gazing at the entrance to his store.

"Haven't you got any cheaper ones?" asked George.

"That's the cheapest I've got. You can't get them no cheaper."

"Yes, we can," responded George. "I've gotten 'em cheaper'n that. I can get shirts like that for fifty cents anywhere."

"This ain't no New York Jew store, you know."

"I don't care what it is," retorted George angrily. "I'm not going to pay you twice their value."

"Well you ain't goin' to stand here and bother my time for nothin'."

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"You go plump to the devil," cried George, determined to fight it out. "Collie, take his bloomin' duds off. We can get 'em cheaper and better at that."

"You can hey?" cried the storekeeper in a rage. "You've been sleepin' out all night, haven't you?"

"None of your business, is it?" cried George, pulling off a trouser leg.

"Well, I'm just thinkin' when you get them things off, an' my clerk comes along, I'll take y'u to a place where y'u c'n sleep comfitibly for a couple of nights, till we find out where y'r a hailin' from, and where y'r agoin' to."

He brushed back his coat, stretched out his suspenders and showed the badge attached to it, "I'm constible here."

"Look here," said George keeping back his tears. "We're looking for work. All I got is a five dollar bill. Let us have at least one buck for something to eat till we can find work, and we'll buy this stuff.

"Y'don't care to go with me hey?" cried the storekeeper, his brutal face breaking into a laugh for the first time.

"No thanks, we'd rather work for our lodgin'," said George, trying to hide his real feelings.

"Well, y'can have the whole business for four-fifty."

"Let'm have it and let's get out," whispered Carl when the man walked off a bit to replace something on a shelf.

The constable and storekeeper took the bill as if he had honestly earned it, selected a key from a bunch of them, turned the ringing crank, placed this bill among all his other bills and handed George a fifty-cent piece.

Glad to be allowed to go, they hastily took their leave, not even stopping in the village long enough to

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buy the loaf of bread they had expected to buy, fuming and raging within themselves as they passed the villagers, and speaking their anger in no uncertain terms when out upon the open road again.

This man was an officer of the law as Colonel Mohton, Major Dunkin and the police that had arrested them, had been, and it was the law that received the hatred that burned and seethed within them. They hated the individuals, but there were so many of them to hate. The law of dissociation created for their hatred a single nebulous creature out of all these individuals, and irrespective of what they were given to calling it by name, that creature was society and society's laws. Woe unto that society and that law that begets many such enemies.

All day they hurried away from the constable's domains, cursing and swearing and promising themselves to get revenge, though both of them knew that they had no intentions of ever seeking the constable to revenge themselves upon. Whom were they going to revenge upon?

All day they walked taking the most out-of-the-way roads and paths, passing through numerous villages, buying bread and cheese to sustain life, and seeking work. Evening came again and with it a sense of uncertainty and a great weariness.

They came upon a shed-like building stuffed with hay and decided after a thorough examination, to remain there for the night. They left the road and went to a stone fence a little distance off and hiding behind trees sat down to rest and to watch, intending when it grew dark enough, should no one appear to deny them the right to crawl up into the hay shed, to go to bed.

The bell of a distant church sounded through the valley and the heavy night lowered upon them. No

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one having appeared, they made their way to the hay shed and crawled up. Hardly exchanging a word they buried their eyes in their arms, and wondering what their mothers might be thinking concerning them, they awaited sleep.

They slept undisturbed till long after the sun had risen and had dried up the dew. With a sun lit summer day before them, and a breakfast of crackers and cheese, they waxed very happy.

They procured their breakfast at a near-by country store, and devouring it while walking they then went about asking for work at every farm house they came upon, without finding any all morning. In the afternoon they came to a farm house where a very stout lady was beating her carpets. They told her that they were looking for work and that they had had nothing to eat that day. She looked at them rather dubiously but decided to "try them." She asked them to beat the rugs that were hanging on the line, while she went in to prepare something for them. She watched them through a little window in her summer kitchen and they knew that she was watching them, and worked exceptionally hard, till they felt that she had taken time enough to have made a lunch for a whole army of tramps and expressed themselves to that effect.

"What the devil can she be making?" cried George.

"Gee! we ought to get enough to eat for all this work," said Carl.

When every piece of the huge heap of carpets and rugs had been beaten, she called them into the summer kitchen and to their grumbling disgust, gave them a fried egg each and several slices of bread and butter, not even a glass of milk or tea. When they were through with that she brought them each a piece of

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sickly looking pie, and began to haul down from some upper room an armful of other rugs and hall runners.

When she had gone out of the room, George remarked, his mouth stuffed with pie, "You got another think coming, old lady. Swally your pie, Collie—let's get."

"You got to beat more o'them carpets," cried the woman in a rage when upon returning to her summer kitchen she saw them making for the road.

"How much?" cried George.

"How much?" she repeated. "An' what about that meal?"

"My dear lady," began George in his sweetest voice, "your banquet was worth ten cents and we've done a dollar's worth of beating. I hope we'll meet again."

They started down the road, leaving her yelling after them and dragging her runners which she had had no intention of beating that day, upstairs again.

A few rods from the house, a private road turned about a group of trees into the lady's garden. Trees made it impossible for her to see them, and, seeing no one else about anywhere, they stole under the garden fence and began to feast upon the richest raspberries they had ever seen, watching out for detection and chuckling as they feasted.

From a corn field near the raspberries, they stole half a dozen milky ears of corn, and making their way out cautiously, they crossed a wild sumac-covered field and came to a creek running through a woody glen.

They hid their corn under a shrub and proceeded to bathe their feet in the creek. Playing at making bridges they built an excellent one across a narrow part of the little stream. Towards night they built a fire with the matches with which they had supplied themselves at the unfinished house, and toasted their corn.

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They also found some blackberries on little vines on the other side of the creek and with these completing their evening meal they played about the creek like things of the woods till it was quite dark, then started back for the hay shed.

They remained in that neighborhood for three days, pilfering the good lady's garden and the gardens of her neighbors, playing about and bathing in the creek, rebuilding and perfecting their bridge, and sleeping in the hay shed. Then tiring of the locality where they were constantly in fear of detection, and becoming very tired of the diet of berries and corn and carrots, they went on, leaving their bridge behind them as a token of their inherent good will towards mankind.

They walked ten miles that day, coming upon a summer resort where there had been a dearth in summer help and where they secured work.

They were employed at a doubtful looking boarding house by a squint-eyed proprietor named Diedrow, and, it being time to prepare the evening meal they were told to seat themselves before a large tub in which were soaking a bushel or more of potatoes and were ordered to peel them quickly. Mr. Diedrow had merely taken them into his kitchen and introduced them most informally to the chef.

"I'd swear," said George in a whisper to Carl as they sat their peeling potatoes, "that this chef is a brother to our own dear Swaney."

"By gollie," said Carl. "You're right. He has the same small eyes and the same red nose."

"Just as big around in the middle, too."

"Wears his cookin' cap the same way even, don't he?"

His apron's just as dirty, too."

"No danger of fallin' in love with him, either."

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"Glad if we don't fall into his paws."

The chef tolerated the whispering for a little while, then, losing his patience informed them that they were not goin' to be paid for talk.

Mr. Diedrow, the "boss," who made his flashy appearance every now and then was a short stocky man whom the desire to make money and the habit of drinking had distorted mentally and physically. He was never known to speak a kind word to any one and the only redeeming feature about him was the universal belief that his "bark was worse than his bite." The mis-shaped face, always angry, always snapping, was red from dissipation and wrinkled from constant strife and only those who possessed an imagination and an understanding could get the faintest intimation of the existence of a soul there. Like all the other help with the possible exception of the chef, whom Diedrow never bullied, Carl and George who had had no opportunity to learn or to understand, having been misunderstood themselves ever since they were born, thought him a vile, wretched, heartless brute.

As if Mr. Diedrow's spirit had been about and had heard the chef's admonition, he suddenly appeared and strengthened it, by an underbreath addition, "Come, now. Come, now. Don't be fiddling away there, them potatoes've got to be ready for dinner."

Before they could have answered him, had they desired to do so, he had already flashed out to some other part of the establishment, to bully some one else along, leaving the boys grinning and whispering to each other whenever the chef had his back turned on them.

After the first supper which by helping themselves they had made very good, they were set to work cleaning and scrubbing all manner of dirty pots and pans. One pot had been standing a long time with a large

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mess of fat in it and emitted so great a stench when the lid was taken off that even Carl with his uncultured sense of smell found it unbearable. Three times he took the cover off and as often was repelled by a stench that made him dizzy. It was beginning to look troublesome, George couldn't touch it, when the sudden departure and protracted absence of the chef, gave them the opportunity to carry the thing out with the lid on. Way out in the yard they turned the thing over with a long stick. After dumping the offensive stuff out with the aid of the stick, they dragged it to the pump and with the most awful grimaces, pumped many gallons of water into it. Then with hot water and nearly a pound of some kind of soda, they got it clean.

When the chef returned, they saw that he had a "couple of drinks" and took his evil-minded rebuke for having worked so slowly without protest.

They were obliged to sleep with the chef in a room in an outhouse. The room was big enough to hold the chef's big bed and two small cots near the solitary window. The window opened up upon the chicken run and the air it afforded was loaded with bad odors. They opened it, however and fell into their cots exhausted. But they didn't sleep very long before the chef who had had a "couple more drinks," came grumbling and stumbling in. The racket he made woke them, but they did not stir. After he had spit all over the floor, it seemed, they were glad to hear him getting into bed. But the crazy man had suddenly discovered that the window had been opened and swearing and cursing violently he jumped off his bed again, groped his way to the window, his big fat hand digging into Carl's ribs as they felt their way, pulled it down with a terrific bang, and emitted a conglomeration of words, in the whole stream of which, they understood but the one word, "Rheumatism."

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When the beast after having returned to his bed, began to snore, George called softly to Carl, "Asleep?"

"No."

"Say."

"Well?"

"The darn fool hasn't taken a bath since——"

"Since! Did he ever take one?"

"Can you sleep like this?"

"No, it's rotten."

"I'm going to open it again."

"Go ahead."

George opened it cautiously, and the old chef slept on, snoring violently without worrying a bit about the dangers they had thus subjected him to, unless he was dreaming about it.

It seemed to them that they had hardly dozed off again when a most uncontrolled banging at the door accompanied by the hoarse voice of the "boss" told them that it was four o'clock and time to get up.

"Holy mackerel!" cried George, "I haven't been asleep yet."

Carl was entirely too wretched to express himself. He felt as though he would give half of his life for the privilege to sleep on for just five minutes more. But the banging never ceased till they got off their cots and told him that they were dressing.

The first thing they were called upon to do was to get ice from the ice house and to fill the refrigerator and the water coolers. They climbed up the ladder leading to the ice house and there began to dig in the saw dust. The ice was not very far down and as soon as they reached it, they began tugging away at the huge, heavy blocks, straining their backs so they ached all the rest of the day. By the time they had dug up enough ice and had thrown it down from the opening, Carl felt faint, sick at his stomach, and very weak.

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After covering up the exposed ice they descended and washed what ice they had thrown down, getting their feet wet in the process, then cut it up into smaller pieces and distributed it as directed.

They were no sooner through with that job, than the "boss" led them to a place where were two large pails and mops and ordered them to get hot water and mop all the porch floors.

When breakfast came, they were already worn out and looked with alarm upon the lengthy day that was yet before them.

After breakfast they were forced to scrub pots and pans again and when through with these the real heavy work of the day, began. They followed the chambermaids upstairs. There they carried large heavy pails in and out of all the rooms, then began sweeping all the carpets in the hallways.

Carl saw very little of George, who with another chamber maid worked in another part of the house. The girl with whom he worked was very nice, but too intent upon her job. She worked very quickly and nervously as if she were constantly afraid of Diedrow's appearance. She discouraged every attempt on Carl's part to make the work more pleasant by conversing. She was faithful to her employer, but to Carl she was nothing short of stupid. "Diedrow has another job for her as soon as this is finished," he reasoned. "What's her hurry?"

He swept for more than an hour without stopping, then suddenly he felt his nose bleeding. Putting his broom aside, he locked the door of the room on himself and stretched himself out upon his back on the bed. When his nose stopped bleeding he resumed his work.

At half-past ten, the chef had a fight with the head chambermaid because he wanted to take the two

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boys away from them, and Mr. Diedrow, fearing the loss of the chef most, decided in his favor.

When they reached the kitchen, each of them was given a heavy, dirty, butcher's cleaver and a pail of hot water. The chef led speechlessly and they following him, came to the chicken coop.

Instantly recollections of scenes in Jim Daniel's butcher shop rushed into Carl's mind and he sickened with the flopping images of headless fowl, open bellied pigs, and mutilated calves. Neither of the boys relished the job before them, but there was enough of the accustomed in the thing to them, to keep them from rebelling. One fat dirty hand of the chef grabbed the legs of a chicken, and utterly dead to the desperate creature's struggling, he laid its head upon the block and in the presence of the rest of the frightened fowls, chopped its head right off with a single stroke and carelessly threw it aside to flop its life force away.

Instructing them to catch two dozen more of them and to kill them in the same manner, the chef returned to the kitchen.

"I'll be damned if I'll do this," cried George when the chef had gone, suddenly sickening at the convulsions of the chicken he had himself beheaded.

"I don't think I will, either," said Carl with a horrified and disgusted expression on his face.

But hardly had he said the last word, when the "boss" dashed out upon them.

"What the devil are you lazing about here for?" he cried, his voice horribly hoarse. "Them chickens've got to be ready for dinner to-morrow."

The boys went to work in spite of themselves. The last chicken Carl killed nearly drove him crazy, as he expressed himself. The cleaver had struck its skull instead of its neck and a most sickening sensation came over him. He felt as if he were committing murder

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and the horror of the suffering he was inflicting upon the creature, took the strength from his arms and he couldn't finish the job. He stood there reeling with the murderous weapon in one hand and the mutilated living thing in the other unable to let it go or to end its suffering by the necessary act of kindness. A cry of horror escaped him and poor George mustered strength enough to strike the thing's head off and Carl then dropped it to flop itself to death.

"He can go plump to —— with his job," cried George, "I've had to kill a chicken sometimes at home, but never so many one after another."

But in spite of their resolutions, they killed as many chickens for the following Sunday dinner and as many for the next Wednesday dinner, swinging the dreadful cleaver with growing ease, taking life as unconcernedly as Nature seems to give it, seeing the blood with as much indifference as if it were water, and handling the mutilated life warm carcasses as if they had been the creators of the life they took.

Three weeks they worked in that fashion and then George awoke one morning, unable to bear the thing any longer, determined to throw up his job. Carl who had hoped that he would come to this conclusion long before this, immediately threw off his apron and very gleefully followed his companion into the sleeping-room to fix up for departure.

They met the proprietor near the porch and informed him of their decision, demanding their wages.

"You can't leave me before the month is up," he answered calmly. "The law says I can keep your salaries if you leave me before the month is up. I pay by the month here."

"We've worked for that money and worked darn hard," cried George, "and we don't care a darn about your laws here. You've got to give it to us!"

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"I have, hey," he snickered, and starting for his kitchen, he continued, "I told you what the law says. We live up to the law out here. I employed you for the season and you can't leave me in a hole like this. If you do, you don't get a damned cent."

"You lie!" bellowed George. "You said you would only try us for a while. We have the right to try you, too. We did try it and we don't care to keep your rotten job."

With a snicker on his distorted face Diedrow left them again, but before he could enter the kitchen a flying missile which the enraged George had thrown at him, just missed his head and fell in upon the kitchen floor. Without saying a word, the proprietor disappeared.

They turned to each other and began discussing the situation, when suddenly a stream of water coming from the cellar struck them upon the head, went down their necks and drenched them to the skin.

The infuriated boys picked up whatever they could lay their hands on and getting out of reach of the stream fired them at the house, till to the alarm and consternation of the boarders, two of the parlor windows went in with a crash, then they took to their heels in the direction of the woods back of the boarding house.

For several days they glided shadow-like about the place, pilfering gardens, begging for more substantial food, and sleeping in barns, or walking all night and sleeping on the dry grass in the day time.

One night, after the boarding house proprietor thought they had left the neighborhood, they rushed out of a cluster of trees upon him as he was making his way with horse and buggy, from a distant and larger village. In true moving picture fashion, they pointed a gun at his head and before he knew what

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had happened to him, they were upon the buggy and at his throat.

Mr. Diedrow, like most tyrants, was a coward at heart and fear got the best of him. He screamed ridiculously but they succeeded in tying his hands and feet, and stuffed an empty grain bag into his mouth. One of the boys hurried down and taking the horse by the reins, led him off the road on to an open space and after crossing that turned beyond a strip of woods, into a very secluded nook. There they tied the horse to a tree and proceeded to take their wages.

When they had got three dollars and some cents, all they could find, Carl threw away the twig that under cover of darkness had served as a gun. Leaving the half drunken man they glided through the woods hilarious with the intoxication of revenge.

CHAPTER XIII.

During the month that followed the escape of the two juvenile prisoners from the reformatory, Matilda was given no peace. The probation officer tormented her. At any and all hours of the day or night he appeared, to see whether the boys had not returned home. He was sure that eventually they'd go back to their homes. Unable to endure it, Matilda abandoned her knitting and after moving to the third floor of a tenement several blocks further west, applied for a job at Androon's shop, which had now fallen into the ownership of Mr. Donald, Androon having sold out that he might concentrate his business ability upon the restaurant and hotel. But the probation officer had a detective constantly following them and when Matilda was settled in her new home, he appeared again and searched through her little flat of three rooms.

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Then came a lapse in the Probation officer's persecution and Matilda hoped that he had given up seeking her boy. But there was a side to Matilda's grief that remained undiminished by the officer's withdrawal. The loss of Carl, the uncertainty of what was happening to him, gnawed into her heart and unceasingly sapped at the little strength she possessed.

One night at the end of that month, Matilda came home from the shop in an especially gloomy state of mind. Her face was paler than ever and the frown that darkened her features was one of intensest agony. Anna of the way home, had tried to get her to talk, but her efforts were futile. She just couldn't talk, she couldn't even weep. The agony expressed so terribly on her face had disabled her motorial nerves—she walked like an automaton.

In her own house she dropped into the rocker and wept. Anna was afraid that she had fallen into a state of melancholia and trembled as she went about preparing supper.

Every once in a while Anna spoke to Matilda but she answered only with frequent heartrending groans and the sound of her rocker. She glanced at her every now and then and her own sorrowful existence weighing upon her, her own weakness and discontent acidifying her mind, she grew somewhat impatient with her. She told herself that Matilda had no right to rob her of her peace of mind, to torment her thus without consideration. It was not necessary for her to act like that all the time. She ceased talking and went about doing her work with a frown on her face.

Matilda who seemed to sense the change that had taken place in Anna, suddenly rose from her rocker and started off to help her, but before she reached the hydrant where she was going, she grew very dizzy and

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called out softly and pathetically, "Anna, dear, help me. I'm falling."

Anna rushed to her with tears in her eyes and Matilda dropped her head upon Anna's shoulder, keeping it there a few minutes till she collected herself and then raising her head, her pale face covered with beads of perspiration, sighed deeply and said with a sad smile, "What a funny feeling it was."

Anna led her to her chair and admonished her not to attempt to help again, and admonished herself for having been impatient. Matilda's unhappy face when she had lifted her head from Anna's shoulder, saddened Anna unutterably. That sorrowful face, that prematurely decrepit form, had once been the graceful little orphan girl that Anna had envied and loved. What was responsible for this dreadful change? Anna's heart went out to her, she wanted to befriend her and she could have fallen upon her knees before her and told her so. She would have rushed to her and put her arms about the wasted form, but she was afraid to do so. She talked kindly to her, the tears involuntarily oozing out. She begged her not to devour herself thus with sorrow and she tried to tell her that she would never leave her, that she would remain by her side so long as she lived and that they'd yet see a brighter day; and Matilda's heart over-flowed with gratitude and she tried to express herself, but words came hard.

"I'm wearing you out Anna," she mumbled, and Anna hurried to deny it, though a few moments ago she had said that much to herself. "Don't worry about me. Don't eat yourself up. It's foolish and it's, it's terrible. If things should become better, if Carl turns over a new leaf, when he gets to be old enough, and tries to make you happy you won't be strong enough to enjoy it."

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At supper table Matilda forced herself to swallow a little of what Anna tried to induce her to eat, and then begging Anna to forgive her for leaving all the work to her, she went into the next room and clothes and all lay down.

Anna cleared away the dishes and washed them, going about her work and growing more and more unhappy as she worked. The silence of the room, the sounds of life out doors, the lovely summer evening, and her desire to go out, intensified her discontent and brought her again to the conclusion that it *was* somewhat unfair to her, that she was enslaved.

She sat down near the window, when through with her work and wept. Suddenly a cry of "Anna" from Matilda sent her into the bedroom.

"Anna," began Matilda when the former had seated herself, "if I told you that I have greatly wronged you—that I had greatly, very greatly wronged you, would you forgive me?"

"Mattie dear, you are dreaming," said Anna softly. "You never wronged me, foolish girl. Go to sleep again."

"I haven't slept a wink since I lay down here, Anna—I'm not dreaming. I want to talk to you. I want to know, if I told you that I had very greatly wronged you——"

"Matilda dear, please don't talk like that," said Anna trembling. "Won't you get up a minute? Come out doors for a walk. You can talk to me there. Really you must go out. You are always inside—you must have some air. Won't you come?"

"Yes, I will," said Matilda, getting up. "I think you're right."

They made preparations for going out and were making for the door when a rap upon it sent Matilda hurrying back to her bedroom. Anna turned the key

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and tremblingly opening the door inquired, "Who is there?"

"Hello, Anna," said a familiar voice and Anna opened the door further to see more of the stranger.

"For heaven's sake, Carl," she cried. "Come in quick."

Carl, ashamed yet with an air of independence, dirty, sunken cheeks, and furtive eyes, expressed his desire to see his mother first, as if he were determined not to go in until he was sure of his mother's attitude towards him.

At sound of his voice Matilda mustered the required strength to walk to the door and with tears running down her cheeks begged him to come in quick so they could lock the door.

"I have a friend with me," said Carl.

The tramp-like George issued from the other and dark end of the hallway and made his appropriate bow.

With sight of her boy, Matilda completely overcame her weakness. She hurried them in, locked the door and went to each of the two windows in the kitchen and drew down the blinds, and by her excitement and evident precaution assured the boys of her good will.

What a sight they made. Pale, sickly looking, and dirty they filled Matilda's heart with compassion, yet the something that played about her baby's face, made the expression of that compassion impossible. The submission he felt only accentuated that something that drove her intense mother love deep down within her. She wanted him to be otherwise. She had dreamed great dreams for him. Why had he so set himself against her with every move he had ever made. Could she have admonished him till she relieved that feeling, she would have opened her heart and showered all her infinite love upon him, but she was afraid

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to admonish him and allowed the things she was ready to do for him to speak for her.

George was very uncomfortable, and Carl was miserable. Carl had tried very hard to persuade George that it wouldn't be good for them to go to his house. He didn't want him there for he was afraid that George wouldn't like it. He was ashamed of his poverty-stricken home. George had told so many things about his beautiful home and the automobile rides he had had to take with his parents, and Carl judged from the fact that George's father owned an automobile, that they were fabulously rich.

Matilda desired to ask many questions but her weakened condition, and the feeling of ill-will that his wrong-doing had awakened in her, kept her speechless. Anna understood the situation and as she hurried about preparing their late supper, she tried to relieve it. She asked all manner of questions and laughed at the answers. In time they began to laugh at them themselves and to try to make them funnier than they would otherwise have been, and even Matilda joined them occasionally.

They seated themselves at the table after washing themselves and ravenously began to eat what was before them as if they had not eaten in weeks.

"Gee! but this tastes good," cried George, biting into a cheese sandwich.

His remarks were equally complimentary about everything laid before him and every remark multiplied Carl's happiness.

Anna and Matilda began to discuss the matter of a bed for them and George helped them by suggesting that they sleep on the floor.

"If you won't mind," said Matilda, "we can manage to make a soft bed for you on the floor in the front room near the window."

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"Believe me," said George, grinning, "It'll be a better bed than the one we had last night, on the soft side of a stone wall."

"Really?" cried Anna, and Matilda's eyes dilated with attention.

"I guess it was really," said George, laughing. "Too really for me."

This one glimpse into what they had endured, took the last trace of resentment from Matilda's heart and she looked upon her boy as a victim of suffering and nothing she could do for him, seemed good enough.

They were very tired and took the first opportunity to get off to bed and Anna and Matilda did likewise.

"I'm awfully glad we came here," said George in a whisper when the two of them were stretched out on the floor in the front room.

"Are you?" asked Carl, delighted with the fact that he had been mistaken in fearing George's meeting with his mother and his home.

"Your mother's awfully nice, and so is your aunt. I like 'em very much—nice little home, too."

The last few words came rather sluggishly and when Carl asked him whether what they were sleeping on wasn't better than wet grass, there was no reply.

Carl was just as tired as his friend was, but he couldn't sleep. His head was hot and feverish, and the delight he took in the turn of things—the security of his little home, so dear to him now—battled with his fear of the institution authorities.

Matilda, too, was unable to sleep, though she was happier and by walking slowly and holding on to things she made her way into the front room.

Anticipating her intentions, understanding the reason for her wandering about, having yet in his mem-

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ory recollections of similar experiences and fearing the inability to play being asleep, Carl spoke.

"Is that you, mother?"

"Yes, can't you sleep?"

"No, not much."

"What's the matter?"

"Oh, nothing. I'll sleep soon."

She bent down over him and placed her rough work-worn hand upon his forehead to see how hot it was, and the irresistible desire seized her. Pressing her lips upon that brow, she kissed him fervently, unable to check the tears that dropped down upon his face.

"Go to sleep, baby," she faltered, saying the term of endearment so softly that it was barely audible, then added, "And don't worry."

Carl wished he could answer her, but it was impossible. Sensing no displeasure, she bent down again, placing her cheek against his lips. He kissed her and she forgave him for all he had ever done against her wishes. Little did he know what a priceless thing he bought with that kiss. Perhaps it is wrong to say that he knew little, for the emotions that welled up within his hardened little soul, beyond his understanding as they were, filled him with a vague hope that was greater than understanding.

Matilda walked as in a dream. Groping her way back to bed, she fell upon it, wetting the pillow with her tears, but feeling the greatest bit of joy she had had since her poor baby had come into the world.

After many hours of feverish thinking and worrying and a few hours of restless sleeping, she woke and found that it was already eight o'clock and that poor Anna had gone off to the shop without her.

"Did she lock the door?" was the first thought that came to her with the full return of her consciousness.

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She stepped off her bed feeling sick and dizzy and after bolting the door and rearranging the rag over the key hole, started back again. She walked further than her own bed to look once more at the face that had been before her all night. The closed eyelids aroused the desire to kiss him again but she thought it better not to, and returned to bed where she slept till ten o'clock.

At ten she awoke admonishing herself for having slept so long, when there was so much of great importance to decide and to do, and feeling very much better she dressed and hurried out upon the street to buy as many good things for their breakfast as she could afford. She felt herself a mother again, with a mother's hopes and duties to live for. She had made another beginning and she swore by the life within her that she would let nothing stand between her and the accomplishment of her greatest hopes. She was going to fight the reformatory authorities, she was going to get him back, she was going to persuade him to return to school and she was going to see that he was happy giving him everything she earned if necessary. She was sure that his hatred of school had been due to his poverty and his home troubles—his lack of good nourishing food and happiness. She would work harder and help the two of them. Since George had such an influence over her boy, she would help him, too. This boy who loomed so big, as could be seen, in her boy's estimation, was more easily approachable than her own boy and through him she could more easily get at Carl.

When she reached the kitchen, both boys were dressed and Carl had already taken the bedding from the floor and placed it on Matilda's bed.

While they ate their breakfast, Matilda sat on the rocker, claiming to have no appetite, and told them as

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she rocked of the manner in which the reformatory officers annoyed her.

"One came around during the day time and another fellow would come around at night. They tormented the life out of us. Why, in the beginning they wouldn't think anything of coming here at midnight and demanding admission. And, you know they'd walk all over my rooms, and search under the beds and in the closets as if it wasn't my home at all."

"I'd just like to punch their heads off," cried George. "Why didn't you break a chair on him when he got to looking under the bed!"

"The darn fools," said Carl, "they ought to know we'd keep away from home where they could get us so easily."

"I'm tickled to think it worried them so much," said George, showing that it tickled him. "Don't it you, Collie?"

"You bet!" said Collie, although he didn't seem to be very much tickled.

"But it worries me," said Matilda, "I don't want them to get you again."

They talked a long time about escaping the authorities. Then both of them talking excitedly at the same time, they described the institution and all its horrors and expressed the undying hatred they had for it and all its officers. Matilda offered to fight for them and get them free if they promised to go back to school and get an education so they wouldn't have to suffer as uneducated people always must toil and suffer, not forgetting to add that she would see that they had a few cents to spend; and they promised enthusiastically, offering all the reasons they could to prove that their promises were genuine.

All day they talked about their plans, growing more enthusiastic as they discussed them. They de-

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cided to move way off somewhere where no one could trace them while Matilda fought their cases.

As the day wore on their plans became more interesting to them and they began to worry about being retaken, and when in the evening Anna came home with the alarming statement that she thought she saw a man looking like the probation officer following her, they became very uneasy.

Matilda felt herself getting weak again under the strain and in spite of their attempts to be calm or even play indifference, the boys showed signs of worryment.

But they spent a most exciting evening making still more plans and deciding upon the most practical. They were to get a room somewhere at the other end of the town. Matilda was to get them new clothes and they were to keep in hiding while she fought for them.

As night drew on, the fear of invasion became intense. Every once in a while some one expressed himself to the effect that it would be nice if they had already got the room and the clothes. Every sound in the hallways seemed to be that of a cautious step. George promised that if the officer came he would beat him insensible so that both could escape and hide while he regained his senses, but horror stricken Matilda discouraged the idea by saying that if they did that, it would be impossible for her to win their case, and somewhat disappointed, George agreed with her.

Out of the dark corners, the reddish lights, the sounds of voices talking, laughing and quarreling, and the dance music that came from a distant scratchy phonograph, rose a slimy figure with claw-like hands and fingers and with a face that was the composite face of Major Dunkin, Colonel Mohtin, the rest of the officials there and some of the boys, carrying with it an atmosphere of dampness, the smell of kerosene and other disinfectants.

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"It would have been better, if we had stayed away yet for awhile," was George's fear infested comment which came like a sigh into the silence of a long pause, but hardly had he finished it when without the slightest warning, the door flew open and the probation officer with two policemen behind him, stepped into the kitchen.

Both boys turned deathly pale and gazed with burning glances at the bloodhounds who had tracked them.

Matilda stood speechless, shaking violently, and Anna near her put her arms on her shoulders.

"I'm going to fight the case," cried Matilda hysterically trying to wrench herself away from Anna. "You let them alone."

"Do all the fighting you like," said the probation officer contemptuously. "They've got to go with us to-night."

The boys were handcuffed and Matilda, following them to the hall ignoring the officers and forgetting that the effect of her plea was weakened into futility by their presence, unable to see the new expression that had set into their faces, she pleaded, "I beg of you, Carl, do everything they ask you to. Don't get into any more trouble. I'll fight for you and get you out."

Without saying "good-bye," chained to his companion, Carl was again led away and Matilda felt once more the agony of child birth, as the slimy creature with its long bony fingers tore her boy from her and she heard the mob out doors feasting its curiosity upon the blood that dripped from her wounds.

Had any one come into Matilda's flat and stripped it of all the little ornaments with the associations of all that was dear to her clinging to them, had they taken with them the worn old furniture and cheap

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curtains on the windows, her little home could not have looked more empty to her than it did with the painful departure of her boy, whom she thought she had had once more. She fell back into her rocker so miserable that she couldn't even cry.

Anna tried to console her but she found her task most difficult. She affected great enthusiasm over the hopes she manufactured, but Matilda sat cold and motionless.

"We ought to go out and walk a bit," said Anna finding herself unable to move her otherwise.

"Oh, I can't go," pleaded Matilda.

"Didn't you say you wanted to see a lawyer tomorrow? Let's go and locate one so you can go right to him in the morning, and begin your fighting."

This had the desired effect. Dressing hurriedly they started out and in the hopes of getting her so tired that she would have to sleep that night, Anna kept her walking about leading her to a very prosperous looking lawyer's office on Broadway, only after she begged her to return.

"I think it's much better to go to a big lawyer like this one," said Matilda, "than to a poor one that would take your money anyway and be unable to do anything for you."

Anna smiled to hear her talk of money, but thinking Matilda had been hoping so intensely that she already imagined herself having the money she must have been planning to get, and not wishing to discourage her agreed with her. Matilda, on the other hand, realizing that she had made a mistake by speaking of money, hastened to explain that she would get some lawyer to do the thing for her and to accept his fees in small weekly payments.

"Yes, I think that can be done," said Anna, "I'm

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pretty sure it can be done. If he's a decent fellow he may do it for nothing."

Having another hope to cling to, Matilda felt better. She looked carefully at the name on the prosperous-looking office and memorized it and the number on the door.

"J. W. Purton," murmured Matilda, repeating it many times to learn it by heart, then turning to Anna added very hopefully. "You know, Anna, I have a feeling that this man will help me, I don't know why."

"There is something in that," cried Anna with pretentious wonderment, "I feel that way, too. Don't make a mistake about it, now. Be sure you find it to-morrow."

When they reached home, Matilda was extremely hopeful and almost happy. She gathered some things to eat and they talked way into the night discussing matters.

It was nine o'clock when Matilda entered the office next morning and she sat there, almost going into hysterics with impatience until half-past eleven before Mr. Purton was ready to see her.

When the attendant asked her to follow him, she was weak and very nervous; but breathing deeply, she exerted herself to the utmost and followed him into the deep-green carpeted private room. The massive leather cushioned chairs, the heavy tables and the rich mahogany desk near which in the greatest ease, Mr. Purton swung in his supple desk chair, confused her still more.

Mr. Purton's face was that of a very important dignitary. There were still evidences of boyishness, most of which years of prosperity and respect had hidden. He looked at her with a slight frown, partly with the purpose of impressing her with his importance and partly because of his resentment of her pertinacity in

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having insisted upon seeing him. She had very little money, he could see that. After all, his experience and power merited only the highest fees. Why couldn't she have stated her case to one of his assistants with whom he had gone into partnership for the purpose of having him take care of just such cases, cases which persist in coming to a good lawyer.

However, Mr. Purton, prided himself on having come from a good family and believed therefore, in being polite, whenever possible.

"What can I do for you, Madam?" he asked her unconscious of the fact that his frown was belying his politeness.

The vision of the boy abused at the reformatory, came like a spirit from another world and pleaded with her in undeniable terms. She mustered up all her strength. She held on to her chair, tightly and struggled to be calm; and, her mind in a bewildered state in spite of her efforts, she began to tell and to plead.

The further she went in her shaky story, the deeper grew the frown on his face and finally, when she launched into an explanation of the depth of her love for her child, the one thing left to her in all this world, he evinced some impatience and told her that that was unnecessary and that what he wanted were the facts upon which she hoped to bring suit.

"My dear woman," he cried when she persisted in telling of her love for him, "I can't go to court and tell the judge that I want him to release your boy, because you love him. You're supposed to love your child. Perhaps if you had loved him as you should he wouldn't be there at all."

The remark came upon her like a blow, and she felt as if she had been thrown from her feet, but she rallied her forces and began her struggle again.

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Mr. Purton found a few blanks and with a pencil in hand, he began taking notes. She tried to give him what she considered facts, and noting or seeming to note a few of them and discarding the rest, he threw his pencil and paper on his desk and sat back.

Matilda had told herself all night long that nobody earned a hundred dollar bill in a minute, and that if she offered it all to the lawyer he would use his influence and get him out at once; but the sight of the furniture, the carpet and the lawyer's clothes, convinced her that even a hundred dollars meant little to such a man. Instead of making her great offer, she nervously asked what it would cost to "try anyway."

"Well," he began very slowly, frowning and rocking himself, as if the whole thing was such a nuisance, "I couldn't waste my time for less than a hundred and fifty dollars in taking the case and the same amount should I succeed—that's helping you out. I never take a case for less than three hundred down and as much afterwards. But I tell you frankly that I don't think I can succeed. According to what you told me, he is a bad boy. The reformatory people are good men. The judge is a good man. They are trying to do the best they can for your boy. They wouldn't let him go, unless I could assure them that he would be taken care of, when released."

Matilda tried to explain that she would take care of him, but he interrupted her.

"Now they would say, 'If you can take care of him now, why did you fail to take care of him before he was taken into the custody of the State?' I know, I know you want to take care of him, but what guarantee has the State that you will be able to do so now, when you failed to do so before?"

Again Matilda tried to explain and again he told her that he knew all she had to say; while he thought

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that what information he might give *her* would do her good. He began to preach. He told her of the duty she owed to society and the wrong she had committed in bringing children into the world.

Matilda saw the hopelessness of her mission and, sickened by the man's uncalled for preaching, and driven to defense, she cried with tears in her eyes, as if by convincing him on this point, she might get his aid. "But do you really mean to say that we have no right to marry, like other people, that we must go on forever working, with nothing in our lives, to——"

"I mean to say, my good woman, that nobody has the right to infest society with bad men, just because they thing they can get some pleasure out of it."

"My dear sir," cried Matilda, emboldened by her anger, "I have heard of a gentleman like yourself, infesting the world with things as bad, for their own pleasure."

"Good for you, madam," said Mr. Purton, rising and smiling jovially. "I have enjoyed the conversation very much, but my time is limited."

He walked up to a book shelf and began looking for a book. Her heart broken, angry, the pain of her disappointment burning on her cheeks, Matilda rose. She shouldn't have fought back, she told herself. She was to blame for this man's refusing to help her boy. She ought to beg for his forgiveness and plead with him.

"Madam," said Mr. Purton, replacing the book and seating himself in his desk chair again, "my consultation fee is ten dollars. Will you pay it now or shall I send you the bill?"

Matilda became bewildered. "Ten dollars for talking to him," she said to herself. "Where was my common sense? Of course you have to pay lawyers. Oh, what a wretched fool I am."

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She couldn't pay it then and she couldn't think of taking it out of the hundred dollar bill. She wouldn't dare break it.

"Send the bill to me," she said, ready to cry with the pain of it all.

"You don't think you ought to pay it, do you?" he asked her, smiling as if such a thing as ten dollars was really not worth bothering so much about. "Tell the truth, madam, I don't want to be sending the bill to you for the fun of it. It all takes time, you know; and my clerk's got plenty to do."

Matilda took heart. Why should she give him ten dollars when he had done nothing for her and it takes her so long to earn that much?

"You don't have to pay it if you don't want to," went on Mr. Purton, still smiling, as if he considered the interview real fun. "My question is, do you think you ought to pay it?"

"I don't think I ought to," she finally blurted out, growing very red and trembling nervously.

She wanted to explain, but he interrupted her. "Explanations unnecessary; good day."

He rang a bell, and the attendant came in and ushered her out.

CHAPTER XIV.

Colonel Mohtin took the runaways with his speckless, white gloves to two separate cells, "coops," and incarcerated them, then he entered the first of these, and locking the door behind him, took off the white gloves, and, despite the cries that reached no ears, he proceeded to instil "respect" for his institution and "love" for society that had sent them there. Leaving the first of the two runaways to "think it over," he

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walked to the second and gave him his valuable instruction, while he joined the first in a bitter resenting howl.

They had plenty of time to think it over, only the direction their thinking took was as North is to South, to that either the Superintendent or Colonel Mohtin, or Society back of them, expected them to take. Instead of using that precious time in coming to an understanding of the justice of their incarceration, or of their original sentences, or of the injustice of wrongs they had committed, they busied themselves with taking stock as it were, of all the bruises, physical or mental, which they had received at the hands of different individuals, and of the powers they had received from life, for paying back.

The two weeks of confinement like sewers in the roadways of their lives, exumed the deadliest odors poisoning blood and thought. And blood and thought entered into every atom of every brick with which was built the foundation and the superstructure of their beings, so that in time, only the most extreme kind of a remedy had any chance of expelling it. Oh, the hours they spent turning from side to side on their bunks, jumping off or on them, making grimaces and watching the passing clouds through the small unreachable windows!

So they lay there for two weeks. The "coops" were like caves and their minds like the "coops" were damp and sunless. The tiny streams of light grew gray before they reached the heart of either. Resentment seethed within them. But there was a life force that throttled it and drove it under cover, a life force that toiled as incessantly as the hearts that pumped their blood. It would have been just as impossible to survive with the ceasing of that force as it was impossible for them to survive with the

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ceasing of their heart beats. That force sat with them in their gloomy cells, just as their mothers might have sat with them, and taught them, more quietly and more patiently, the lessons of adjustment; and, with the occasional tears rolling down their worn and yellow faces, they learned their lessons well.

As the year went by, Carl settled down into a model inmate, capable of instant obedience, of good drilling, and of respecting visibly those who claimed superiority by virtue of their power. To be sure, he learned very little reading or writing or figuring, or anything that might direct his mind to the better world or make his life easier after he left the beneficent protection of the protectory, but since all people are not alike, *since some can learn readily and others can never learn,* no one was really blameworthy and the reformatory life went merrily on, paying salaries, buying rotten food, keeping doubtful statistics, and conducting smiling visitors through the building.

His teacher was only human and soon tired of reporting him and thereby lowering her own standard as a teacher; and, being capable of learning, had learned that it only disturbed the peace of the class to try to teach him or to try to interest him in her arithmetic or geography or spelling, and worse than all, that it dissipated a great deal of the valuable time that she needed in keeping aflowing the stream of copied compositions and Christmas calendars that the superintendent had ordered to pour into the exhibition hall. There were other and more suitable means of educating him. You can't bother educating a man "who was born to be a plumber or a baker." Carl was taught plumbing, despite his feelings towards that particular profession. But Carl was wiser than they took him to be. A few weeks after he had been turned to the plumbing trade, he almost ruined

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the whole piping system of the institution, and after giving him the deserved talking to, he was sent to the baker shop to learn to bake bread and cake, and incidentally to hate the baker shop, the heat and the confinement and to long more passionately for parole. Nothing was further from Carl's mind than the desire to become a plumber, a baker or even a house painter; but he did have to learn something there, and he figured that it might as well be baking bread and scrubbing floors as anything else. He wanted to do nothing that *they* wanted him to do and the thought that when he was paroled he would do neither of the things they were teaching him was a consolation to him.

So Carl sat through his school hours, did his scrubbing and his baking, grew bigger in body, smaller in learning, and expanded most in dreams of living and doing as he was then unable to live and to do.

As the day of parole approached, George and he began making plans for meeting in the outside world—the friendship that might have ended in a fight was idealized and through suffering and unreasonable opposition, became ideal.

Matilda never failed to take the opportunity to visit him, but she was constantly complaining when she came. Things were not going well with her. She told him that she had lost her job at the shop and had to live on the kindness and charity of Anna, that she was becoming very weak and sickly and that Anna, too, was very frequently "laid off" and Matilda didn't know how long she would be willing or able to support her.

These things she constantly harped upon, and Carl began to feel that she was anxious to get him out so that he could earn her living for her, and not only was that in itself displeasing, but the dread of the

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shop was as great to him as his hatred of the reformatory, and he began to spend his leisure moments scheming to escape both.

In the complexity of assignments, so many boys constantly going out and constantly coming in, it happened one morning that Carl and George fell into the same group, assigned to scrub the vast dining room floor, daily, for four weeks.

The new squad supplied itself with pails and mops and proceeded to the execution of their orders.

The elderly lady in charge of the dining room had had a quarrel with Colonel Mohtin and was discharged and Major Dunkin had offered as a substitute the motherless daughter of a friend of his, a young lady, Maggie, by name, who though still extremely young, was very much afraid of becoming an "old maid," and who, to preserve or accentuate her youth and all that goes with youth, clothed her voluptuous little figure in the best clothes she could get by working out as a servant girl. She spent every cent she earned, that her father didn't spend for her in drink, and adding to her clothes, paint and powder and perfume, she flirted with everybody that was flirtable; but the little country village where she lived and worked gave her but a minimum of opportunity for the exercise of her charms and she accepted the position at the reformatory where she hoped, with all the teachers, officials and visitors, she would not only get more out of her life, but possibly strike a match with somebody. After she had been at work at the institution for several weeks, she received a letter one day from her little sister Alice, a girl of sixteen, in which Alice complained of the father's constant drinking and abusing her. Maggie went to the superintendent of the institution and asked him to help her out. Superintendent Moore had a little son three years old who

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needed attention and agreed to employ Alice to take care of him for her board, claiming that she would have little work to do and be free when the youngster slept.

As the weeks went by and Maggie found her life at the institution less interesting than it had been in the small village up the State, she began to go off with her little sister on regular evening pilgrimages to the great city. What the two girls did alone in the city, nobody knew.

George had developed rapidly. The brilliant red in his cheeks had about all gone and the stare in his eyes had assumed a bit of stupidity which the stare of institutional boys assumes, but he was a good looking boy, nevertheless. By that law or quality of human nature which makes us desire with abnormal intensity those things which we are denied, the urge of sex was abnormal in George and having stolen into his thoughts began to monopolize him. So it was that when assigned to scrub the floor in the dining room where Maggie supervised, he thought more of her than he did of his scrubbing, and as the days went by their precarious friendship became intense.

One day Alice left her charge at the superintendent's cottage and came to make a hurried visit to her sister in the dining room. For five minutes her pretty lips moved rapidly expressing some silly notion that had come upon her suddenly and that had demanded expression, then the boys saw her stop and smilingly listen to what Maggie had to tell her. Soon both girls stopped gossiping and to show her sister the authority she possessed, Maggie began ordering some of the boys about. Finally, when all were quite busy scrubbing, George looked up and found Maggie trying to get his attention. She winked to him mischievously and motioned him to come to her. Maggie had seen

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other officials call boys to speak to them for the gratification of visitors, and felt that in her capacity of dining room mistress, she had the same right.

"Isn't he a nice boy?" she asked her sister, grinning and causing him to grin. The sound of keys interrupted the introductory proceedings and sent him flying back to the floor.

The Colonel entered, frowned to find Alice there and passed out again. Alice left when he was gone, not wishing to give him the satisfaction of going as soon as he appeared, but made it her business to visit her sister often after that.

George, ever true to Carl, managed to work him into membership in the conference, and before very long, contrary to the general belief that he couldn't learn things easily, he learned to act with perfect satisfaction to the other three members, and life assumed a very much brighter hue to all of them.

At the end of a month, a new squad was assigned to the dining-room, and with the exception of a very few opportunities to converse over things going on in the city, as the girls on their pilgrimages saw them, and to receive infrequent and vicarious notes, often scented and stimulating to intoxication, there was nothing for the two boys to do but dream of what had been and to plan for the future.

Then it happened one day that an official who despised Major Dunkin and everybody remotely connected with him, caught Maggie with her arms around the good-looking George while he was supposed to be cutting bread for supper, in the narrow little bread room.

Maggie was discharged when that official threatened to expose the matter, and Alice went with her.

The second year after the two boys' desperate and almost successful escape was drawing to its close.

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Whatever in their aspect that had not been that of the regulation reformatory inmate at the end of their first year was there then. There was in that aspect evidences of queer combinations of fear with a touch of daring courage, superficial subserviance with inward defiance and hatred, indifference with an intense curiosity, cynicism with a deep hidden faith in sensuous pleasures, and dislike and hatred for almost everybody, with a core of smothered love—a passion long pent up for want of an object, but pouring out in a revivified all consuming stream upon the two girls who of all creatures connected with the institution were the only two beings that had shown them the slightest touch of the consideration they desired.

Suddenly, one day a sister of George, though he was his mother's only child, came into existence, and George began to receive letters regularly. Those who read the letters he received and those that he sent out in reply had so many letters to read they had no time to read between the lines and entertained no suspicions whatever, and finding no references in them to the institution, allowed them to pass.

Oh, the nights they lay awake in their gloomy cells, dreaming of the expiration of the days that intervened between each night as it came and the joys they now felt awaited them on their release! They were "model" inmates, indeed. Not a single act would either of them commit that was at all likely to result in a *report*. No insult, no order, no job, however trying, could make either one of them bite back. They were reformed and the institution was proud of this reformation.

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CHAPTER XV.

The day came upon which George should have been released, according to his own figuring, based on what he knew of the rules of the institution and the laws that had incarcerated him; but not a word was said to him about it. He had served a double term because of his attempt to escape and felt that if being put away in the reformatory was a penalty he had long ago paid for his crimes. He waited almost a whole week before he began to make his appeals to Superintendent Moore. But his appeals were not only ineffective, but almost resulted in prolonging his sentence.

"They got y'u, that's all there's to it," he commented when offered consolation by the other boys. "They want us to obey the rules, but they don't obey their own, all right. They do just as they like, because they got y'u, because they're stronger than we are."

None of the boys disagreed with him. All advised him to be patient, to get out and keep away. But that didn't satisfy him. He had been looking forward to his day of freedom for so long a time that every moment of waiting, after he felt he had earned his parole, was a severe punishment. There was no champion anywhere to champion his cause. He was in their hands to be dealt with as they pleased and he hated them more than ever.

At last, one day, he was called into the office and there found his mother, a small, neatly dressed, good looking woman. His joy was so great it superseded all his ill will for the moment and he showered his affection upon her. She loved her boy and was really glad to see him and to think of his going home with

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her, but there was something in his face, something in her mind that had been aroused by what he had done and what she feared he might do, that subtracted greatly from the amount of affection she might otherwise have shown.

The first cloud that sailed in upon his sunny sky was the refusal of permission to say good-bye to those whom in the land of bondage and sorrow he had learned to love.

"They don't let you say good-bye to the boys, just because they want to be mean," he said to himself, and swore his vilest oaths.

He put on the clothes his mother brought him and started off with her. The superintendent shook hands with him and offered him some advice, which he was entirely too much excited to hear. He was so angry at the superintendent for refusing to allow him to say good-bye to Carl and some of the other boys that if he hadn't feared that it would militate against him, he would have refused to shake hands with him.

His mother kept studying him in his excitement as they sailed across the river in the little boat, and the more she looked at him the more unhappy she became. Something had happened to her boy. The boy she had sent away was not the boy that she was taking home. He was older and bigger, and something about his face, his eyes and mouth, made her think that every one who looked at him in the car could see that she was taking him home from a prison.

She informed him of the many changes that had taken place since she had last seen him and since he had last seen his home, and offered the hope that he had decided to mend his ways, that he would now know how to behave himself, and that he would appreciate what his parents were trying to do for him. She laid before him the many chances he had of

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"making good," and George listened with down cast eyes.

"You can even go to college if you want to," she said, watching him furtively to see the effect her remark would have upon him, "if you show us that it is worth doing so much for you."

George did not answer. He knew that a college diploma would be a helpful thing to have, and he had heard a great deal about college life that appealed to him, but he knew that he would have to study very hard for a few years before he would know as much as an ordinary common school graduate and that he would have to work four years or more in a high school after that before he could think of entering a college. He could never do all that, he knew he couldn't. It was the unattainable. He was too old. It was too late. It was like a long dreary road and he was fagged out. He knew he would never go to college.

"If you are foolish enough not to want to go to college," said his mother again, taking his silence and the expression on his face to mean that, "if you must be like your father, who never liked study, you can go into business and make a man of yourself that way. You can go into business with your father."

George had never got along with his mother, but he did not dislike her; in fact, if she hadn't done so much nagging, though he often felt she was justified in doing so, he should really have liked her very much; but his father he had never liked, and the thought of going into business with him was very disagreeable. He remembered times when he deliberately attempted to be friendly with him and the rebuke he got he could never forget. He remembered one time, especially, when before several of his friends at the house, he had made some remark in an attempt to show that his father and he were friends, and his father, before all

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the people, had answered him in such a mean way that he went off and cried in humiliation. It was impossible. Under no circumstances could he work with him.

They arrived within a block from home, and George's heart beat violently at sight of the familiar house saturated with associations. It stood on a sparsely settled street in the northern suburbs of New York. He saw the whole place some time before he reached it. There was the odd shaped garage where he had spent so many of his truant days. He remembered with a smile the manner in which he used to steal into the garage and work quietly over the automobile or read some boy's books all day while his mother thought he was at school. He wished that all the folks were away and he could go over every bit of the ground and commune with everything so dear to him. He looked longingly for Billy, his bulldog friend. On the porch sat his grandfather, rocking himself, and George felt uncomfortable at the prospects of meeting him and having to talk to him. He remembered the very sentence the old man had used in agreeing with his father as to the desirability of sending him away.

Billy, who had been lazily crouched in his kennel, scented their approach and wriggling all over, ran to meet them. He stopped just before reaching them and combined in alternate execution his friendly greeting to her and his distrust for the stranger. But suddenly he recognized the stranger and went mad with joy. He jumped at him, trying to kiss him and flew around him in the greatest excitement. It was the warmest, kindest greeting George had ever received, the kindest greeting he knew he would receive, and he responded accordingly.

His grandfather arose, and slowly walking down

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the porch steps, came to meet him with a smile and an extended hand. There was a great change come over the old man, and George felt a pang at his heart at sight of him. The old man had grown markedly older and very much more gray and in spirit, too, he seemed older, and as far as George was concerned, he seemed to have grown better. Most men grow kinder and better as they approach their own departure. George shook hands with him and felt, as he did so, that he liked that beaming old face better than he had ever liked it before, and because of the change that had come about in his grandfather, George was disappointed in his grandmother. She was the same woman she had been—very considerate and kind, but eternally preaching. Her very look reproached him with the shame he had brought upon the family.

They thought he was hungry and asked him to sit down at the table, which he saw had already been spread for him by the old woman servant whom he had never seen before, who had replaced happy-faced Mary whom he had looked forward to meeting again; but he couldn't eat. The disappearance of poor Mary, whom he liked, the sight of so many familiar things, the rooms, the piano, the heap of cut glass standing where it had always stood, the pictures and the furniture, filled him with sadness, and he felt that he should choke if he tried to eat anything.

"Let him go upstairs and wash and rest a bit," said the old man, with an old man's consideration and an old man's impatience, and George was most thankful to him for it.

On his way up, every corner was alive with ghosts of memory and he was almost afraid to be alone. He entered his little room and quickly locked the door behind him. Retrospection filled his mind with a conglomeration of feelings and he fell upon his bed

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and buried his face in the clean white pillow. He felt lost. At one moment he wished that he had escaped successfully and been able to keep away until he was twenty-one, while at another the things of his room so loaded him with sadness he feared to go away.

He lay on his back gazing at the ceiling. He saw the holes in the woodwork he had made with his air rifle, and under a shelf, which he had made himself, hung the air rifle itself. A great desire possessed him to seize it and to shoot with it; but he was afraid it would anger his mother to think that he could get at that before he spoke to any of them. The shelf was loaded with the playthings he had had and about which he had so often told Carl when he had first met him. And he wondered whether Carl's eyes would bulge at seeing them now as they did listening to tales of them then.

He was interrupted by a rap on the door and admitted his grandfather, carrying a tray loaded with fruit and other good things to eat. The old man just offered a few kind words and left him to himself.

George's mother and grandmother had gone out upon the porch and there sat down to talk things over.

"I don't know what to do with him," began Mrs. Brown, staring out upon the sun-lit walk. "He doesn't want to go back to school and I know he will never get along with his father in business, and I don't like to have him go to work."

"Well," began the old lady with a shake of her head, "if you're going to leave it all to him, you *won't* know what to do. It seems to me that you ought to be able to tell George what his parents want him to do and have him do it."

"We ought to know by this time that that doesn't work with George," said his mother emphatically. "All the lickings he got didn't do him any good. Maybe

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if his father hadn't been so strict with him he wouldn't have gone to the reformatory."

"I've been telling you all along that instead of sending him to the reformatory, which did him no good, you should o' kep' 'm home and watched 'm yourselves."

"I think I did enough watching," said Mrs. Brown, trying to control her anger at the old lady, who always offered the same argument in spite of all the reasoning she had done with her; "maybe too much. The truth of the whole thing is that it runs in the family. None of the Browns ever done any studyin'. His father never wanted to do nothin' till he got into business—nothin' that anybody else wanted him to do."

"It's very easy to put it off on that," said the older Mrs. Brown, very much hurt by the insinuation, "but I think if you will look a little closer round yourself, y' might find a few other reasons. I ain't seen any great scholars in any of the *Smiths* I met or heard talk about."

"The further I go round myself," cried the younger Mrs. Brown before the other had finished her sentence, "the more I see that it's all on his father's side. My people never had the chance to become scholars as yours have had, and then they didn't none of them do bad. You spent hours and hours when George was a little boy telling him how your boys and his father never wanted to study and all about all the funny tricks they were always up to."

"People are so anxious to run around in their automobile," cried the old lady, ignoring what George's mother had said, and in her excitement, anxious to say those things that would hurt most, "that they can't even let the boy do his home-work, and then up an' doing it for 'im in the morning so's his teacher

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wouldn't kick, don't have to go back to the old people to find where the trouble lies."

"Now that makes me rippin'. How many times did I do his home work f'r 'im?"

"I saw you myself doing that dozens of times, but even once'd be enough."

"What about you keepin' the boy on your knees an' telling him all the funny tricks your sons did?" cried Mrs. Brown, somewhat nonplussed. "Did that help the boy to like school when you sit an' tell 'im ever since he was a baby that his father ran away from school and from home, and always raised the deuce with all his teachers? I heard you tell him once the way his father used to lick the teacher."

"I don't think the boy ever thought of them after they was told. But you needn't go into them things so, and forget all about your everlastin' ridin' around in the automobile. The boy never knew what a book was. He never seen a soul sit down an' read anything for five minutes in this house. How could you expect him to want to read and to do any home work and studyin'. Every night, every night, rain or shine, summer or winter, automobilin', automobilin', automobilin', all the time. Y'u can't say I ever did that with one o' my boys."

"Oh, what's the use talkin'," cried the younger Mrs. Brown, bitterly. "People are just blind. They can't see anything they do themselves. I never scolded the boy but what he ran to his grandmother and you took him nicely right in, gave him a good meal and kep' 'im over night. I know times when we were just crazy not knowin' where he went to, only to find you kep' 'im over night. That helped him to like his home, didn't it? I tell you one thing. If you want to bring up children, keep away from your relatives. Every time I said one thing or did one thing somebody'd be

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sayin' and doin' something else. The boy just thought it all a joke."

Old Mr. Brown came out on the porch to join them, though he had heard the quarrel and had decided to keep out of it. Fearing that she would now have both of them to quarrel with, George's mother deliberately got up and walked into the house, leaving them to express their opinions as they liked.

"So that's what they've been thinkin' all along," she kept saying to herself in the kitchen. "I spoiled him. I run around with the automobile all the time. He kept her like a servant all her life and she can't stand seeing me having a better time. You needn't like it and you needn't stand seeing me having a better time. You needn't like it and you needn't come around here any more. I spoiled him! Sitting and telling him those stories—that's just what made him so bad—it was all tricks—tryin' to play the tricks she told him about. Forgot them! I guess it don't look like he forgot them when he was always trying to do all of them."

George walked the floor of his room, thinking of what he would say to his father and wondering how his "old man" would treat him, dreading the evening meal, wishing that he and Carl had been successful in their attempt to escape, picturing himself walking in fearlessly when he was twenty-one.

He felt even more uncomfortable than he had feared he would as he sat at the dinner table that evening. His father, a typical business man, with an unapproachable mien, tall and broad shouldered, black mustached and an habitual frown on his face, could not hide the ill will he felt towards his son, who had caused so much unpleasant talk about his family; and sat with the expression on his face of one who had a great deal to say, but who waits for the proper time.

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There was a most uncomfortable feeling in the atmosphere. Every one's face was clouded and very little was said.

"What do you intend to do?" the father questioned, looking at him with an expression of anger and disgust, while they were waiting for dessert.

"I don't know," said George, staring blankly at the table cloth.

"Y' don't know?" said Mr. Brown again, and was about to let loose all that he had within him when his wife shook her head negatively and bit her lips in a desperate effort to get him to say no more.

Mr. Brown turned in the direction of the coming dessert, with the expression of "I'll have it out with you some other time," and said no more.

After dinner, George claimed to be very tired and went up to his room. He locked his door, turned out the light, and getting down on the floor, pressed his ear tight against the steam pipe leading down into the dining room and listened to what his father might have to say.

"There's no use askin' him what he wants to do," cried Mr. Brown. "He's got to do what I want him to do, and I tell you it won't be a matter of sending him to any reformatory to get beat, I'll do the beatin' m'self. And if you only don't butt in, I'll show you I'll manage him all right after this. He's almost a man, I know all that, but I'm strong enough to do it an' I'm going to do it—he ain't twenty-one yet. That's the only thing that'll go with George. I ain't goin' to let him go around here sneerin' in my face, just because his mother objects to hear'n 'im cry."

"Look here, Dan, you know you did all the beatin' you wanted to."

"Not enough. Not half enough. He ain't goin' to have such a good time after this. He'll do his

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work, or I'll knock the stuffin's right out of him. He's going to the academy and he'll do his work there all right. I spoke to the principal of that academy the other day. He'll take care of him all right. I'll see that he doesn't leave the academy a day till he's through there. He'll work, all right, and believe me, Mrs. Brown, I'll see after this that he does!"

"You will, hey?" cried George within himself, and rose to his feet.

Until two o'clock in the morning, George sat up in his lightless room, planning his escape, and then, after gathering a few of the little things he wanted, he crawled out of the window, dropped as noiselessly as he could on to the roof of the shed-like laundry, and from there jumped to the lawn. Billie ran towards him with a half uncertain bark, but he silenced him by putting his cheek tight against his head. Poor Billie tried to kiss him and run after him, but in both attempts he was repelled.

Very sorry for his mother, and dubious over the outcome of what he was doing, yet strongly impelled by the unpleasant attitude of his father, a very good man among his friends, he disappeared.

CHAPTER XVI.

Carl's temper, not so much his character, kept him longer at the reformatory than George had been obliged to be there, but when George had left, his desire to get out became strong enough to arouse a will power that could overcome his temper, and so he became the most scrupulous individual at the protectory. He knew that fair or foul, just or unjust, every report given him meant an addition of three

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weeks to his sentence. Every officer knew that fact and never failed to wield the club over him.

Realizing that it was but a matter of weeks, he was willing to obey implicitly those things that he could obey. Instead of shirking, as he used to, when he wasn't watched, he now worked, apparently, with a will. When ordered to get on his knees and scrub some floor hurriedly, he would do so as quickly as he could, though he knew that another job awaited him as soon as that was done. But in school things were different. There development and experience were needed, and mere obedience was often impossible. But the school that had in the two years found him hopeless and had out of the kindness of its nature allowed him to dream his days away, now tormented him with demands he could not obey and he received report after report, and he hated it with undying bitterness.

However, the desire to get out never weakened, and, driven to desperation, he learned to memorize, a thing which he thought he could never do, and the reports came less frequently, and soon disappeared.

During all the three years Carl's heart and soul had been centered upon one thing—liberty. His work had been very hard and unpleasant, but he would not have minded that so much, if it had not been for the fact that he was driven by force to do it. Being forced to do anything was what Carl never could get used to. That was the key-note of his misery. He had begun his hard fight against outward force the day he was born. As a baby he had cried himself weak against his binding clothes and later fought against all restraint. The things he had done willingly, he had been able to do well. What he wanted was some kind influence to point out to him that to obey a just demand was not defeat. As if the restraint of home and school had not harried him enough, he landed

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in the reformatory, where he fell into a vise, where he couldn't turn his head without somebody's sanction.

The three years of incarceration were three long years of nightmare. When the day came on which he was taken into the office to find his mother there with a bundle of clothes ready to take him home with her, he felt as if he had been a somnambulist and had just awakened. He felt as if he had been groping through a long, bitter night and, weary and sick, had just arrived into warmth and sunshine. The thought of being free from eternal marching, from iron doors, from the smell of disinfectants, from stone walls, and from superior officers, was like the relief of an opiate to a man in great excruciating agony.

He was very happy to see his mother and most happy to find himself going away with her, and for the sake of peace, for the sake of that freedom which was intoxicating, he promised himself, standing on the deck of the little boat and looking back at the gloomy walls, that he would never do another thing that might take him back there. He hated every brick, every bolt and every board in that institution, and a creepy feeling came over him that despite his apparent freedom, he was still under its vile jurisdiction.

Matilda was as happy as he was; more happy than he was. She kept turning to him constantly and with her pale face beaming, said: "See, I told you that the time would pass away quick! It's all over now."

"It didn't go so very quick," Carl insisted, "but it's over now, and I want to keep away."

Carl had noticed a change in his mother. He had seen it taking place little by little—a little every visiting day; but when Matilda brought him into her new home, a smaller flat, in a poorer neighborhood, and

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took off her hat, he saw that there had yet a greater change come over her than he had perceived.

The new flat consisted of but two small rooms, and they were close and dark, and their gloom fell upon him with painful heaviness.

Matilda tried her very best to please him, and he tried hard to look pleased, but did not succeed.

The lunch she made for him was little better than the meals he had had at the institution, the taste of some of which still lingered in his mouth. He thought of the many meal times at the reformatory when he would drop into his chair in the dining room with a great desire for the things his mother had gotten for him on several occasions that he remembered. Sitting there he used to think at those times, of the things his mother would have for him when he was free once more, and now that he was free and sitting at the table in that gloomy little flat and the food before him was poorer than it had ever been at his home, he was filled with the dread that everything he had looked forward to with great anticipation would prove to have been greatly exaggerated—that he had greatly overestimated, overrated the whole matter of his freedom, which considering the necessity for his going to work at once, was perhaps not freedom at all. The blight of a poverty deeper than he had known had fallen upon the little home.

His mother retold him of the loss of her job, as if the many times she had told him when she had visited him, had not made it clear enough to him. She pointed to a bundle of baby moccasins and explained why she had had to go back to knitting them, and the sight of them brought back many a painful recollection to him.

"All I can make at these things," said Matilda, "if I work very hard all day, is thirty cents. That isn't enough to cover my share of the rent and my food.

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Anna has had a very hard time of it at the shop, too. They put them off on piece work and during the last two months she has hardly been able to earn five dollars a week. There were times when I couldn't earn anything at all and had to live on poor Anna; that is why I took this small flat. It only costs us six and a half dollars a month; but if you get work and earn a couple dollars a week, we can get better rooms."

Carl had vivid memories of work, his mind dwelling on poor Willie Bradd's life and end; he made no reply. He listened half-heartedly to his mother, who was very unhappy about the expression on his face, and as she talked, and he apparently listened, he kept mentally arguing with himself, "Might as well have stayed there."

But after a little while, Carl admonished himself for already being sour. "I should be very glad," he thought to himself, and began at once to gather all the things he ought to be glad about. The strongest hope was that of finding George and going out into the country with him again, before the summer was gone. He liked the idea. He didn't think "they" were all like Mr. Diedrow, and tried to convince himself that they weren't. "What's the difference," he thought, while his mother went on telling about what would happen if he would get a job, "we won't have to be afraid of them now being free, and we can raise the devil with the farmers if they get funny with us."

His mother went to work and talked away as she worked, while he, apparently listening, was very far away. He thought of the morrow, the walk he would take, the possibility of coming across Jimmie or Minnie, walks into the country looking for work, and a thousand other things.

Anna was delighted to see him.

She had been able to visit him but twice after

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he had been captured, and could not get over the fact that he had grown so much bigger, in her good-natured, kindly way, constantly alluding to it and making him proud of it, "You're a man already."

They spent a very pleasant evening. Anna seemed especially good humored and had a very good effect on Carl. The impression she made upon him that night was different from the impression he carried with him. She seemed different, very different to him then. He wondered what change had taken place in her, but later it occurred to him that it was he who had changed and saw the same good Anna in another way.

They treated him as if he had just arrived from a long journey, and he soon felt better. As soon as Matilda was sure that he was more at ease, she began to talk shop and work again, and in his happier state of mind, Carl accepted the inevitable gracefully, though inwardly he assured himself that he would do better than go back to the shop.

They talked a long time of the shop, of getting a new home, of going to evening school, and then went to bed. In spite of his feeling better than he had, he was glad to go to bed. Not that he expected at all or even desired to go to sleep at once, but because he longed for seclusion. It had been a long time since he had heard people talk loudly and freely and the evening's conversation was a strain upon him. He was glad to have the light put out and to feel alone. The noise of the tenement humanity, talking, singing, yelling and fighting, the grinding of car wheels and the rumbling of wagons, was most distracting to him, and he longed for the sepulchral silence of the cells.

He managed to drive some of the noise out of his mind by pressing tight against the pillow. His mind,

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like the clouds he had seen through the little window of the "coop," sailed on from thought to thought, from state to state, from the past to the present and the future. Over and over again he thought of Minnie and Jimmie, longing for them at one moment and hoping never to come upon either of them again in the next moment. These thoughts had come in indistinct flashes and were followed by more clearly defined thoughts of Alice and Maggie and George. How he longed to see them! His impatience tortured him. He would go to look for them next day, he promised himself.

He fell asleep and slept restlessly; then suddenly awoke with a great start and sat up in his bed gazing about himself in bewilderment. He had the feeling of having heard the bugle and of having dangerously overslept. For a moment it seemed to him that he was still at the reformatory; that he had merely dreamt of freedom, and the disappointment was unbearable. All the dread of being reported, of having three weeks added to his stay there, came back upon him that moment. He rubbed his eyes and laughed to himself. He was free. He was away from there, and cursed them for all they had ever done to him, but he smiled as he cursed.

"Anna," cried Matilda, "the alarm clock has rung already."

"So that's what I heard," said Carl to himself. "I guess that'll be my bugle soon, too."

He slept in the little kitchen, and Matilda asked him to dress quickly as Anna had to come in for her her breakfast. When he had done so, Anna came in with a weary, sleepy expression on her face. The happier look of the night before was gone, and Carl was very sorry for her.

Matilda, half dressed, her hair uncombed and an

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expression on her face that told of her suffering some physical pain, hurried in after her, and grabbing the bedding of Carl's cot, carried it into the other room—Carl took the cot in for her, then seated himself on the rocker and watched the little drama. Matilda cooked the coffee, cut the bread, brought the necessary dishes, and Anna sat down to bolt down her breakfast—she had overslept some ten minutes. Everything they did, was done quickly and silently. It seemed so much like life at the institution to him and made him very unhappy. There was the same haste, the same silence, and the same gloom.

"You're not going with me this morning?" asked Anna, finding it impossible to smile, much as she thought it necessary.

"No; you speak to the foreman about me, and if he wants me, I'll come tomorrow," said Carl vaguely, hoping that the foreman wouldn't want him.

Anna hurried out and away, and Matilda asked him to have his coffee, getting the better of her pain and feigning light-heartedness for his sake.

The coffee tasted good, and the bread and butter seemed much better than the stuff he had eaten at the reformatory, but his appetite was not very big, and he ate but little.

"I don't think I'll be back at noon, mother," he said to her when through, taking his hat and going to the door. "I want to take a long walk to see things a bit before I get to work."

"Wait a minute," said Matilda, continuing to chew a bite of her breakfast of bread and butter. She hurried into the other room and soon came back with a quarter in her hand.

Carl looked at her with surprise, his cheeks growing red. He did not want to take money from her. She looked so sad and worn out from the toil that

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had earned it, yet it would make his walk much pleasanter. He protested weakly, but she knew he wanted it and insisted on his taking it. She saw, however, that it was impossible for him to take it, and dropping it into his pocket, she shoved him gently out and closed the door on him.

He stood in the semi-dark and stuffy hallway a moment, completely lost, then started slowly down.

The breath of the great outdoors, foul as it was in that unhappy slum world, was delightful to him. With a mental condition like that of an invalid who is about to walk for the first time in months, he started upon his journey to the past. He was actually afraid of so many people—they all seemed to stare at him. Confinement on the gloomy side of the high wall and so many days and night in the "coop" still had their curse upon him. After walking but a few blocks he was inclined to go back home. There was an oppressive feeling about his heart and lungs and he desired to shrink within himself, but he got over this feeling after a little while, and when he got over it the desire to see the things he had dreamed about the night before drove him on.

Three times he passed back and forth in front of a newly painted candy store, not quite certain whether it was the one he was thinking about or not. A woman, much younger than Mrs. Valey, dressed in a kimono with red roses painted on it, came out and threw some paper into a rubbish can. As soon as he went in Carl was assured that it was Mrs. Valey's candy store, and the emotions that welled in his soul made it hard for him to speak, and the lady who had by this time reached the other side of her counter, looked at him as if she thought he were stupid.

He bought a two-cent glass of soda, and after drinking it was able to question her.

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"Oh, she died a year ago, I guess," said the lady in answer to his question as to Mrs. Valey's whereabouts. "A relation came down from the country somewhere and buried her."

In spite of his hatred for the old woman, Carl was sorry for her. The associations clinging to the little store, the idea that the poor old woman had really been robbed and had worked very hard for the few pennies taken from her, all this filled him with compassion and a tear forced itself out of his eyes. He paid for his soda with the quarter and walked to the door where he reminded himself that the lady hadn't given him his change. He turned about and demanded it and found the lady staring at him. To hide her intention to keep the change herself, she smiled as if she had just waited to see how far he would go.

He left the candy store and wandered down to his old neighborhood. Everything was changed as if the things had lived and all, like Mrs. Valey, had died, while he had been held in bondage. In place of the tenement where his consciousness had begun, to which his memory always flew, was a bigger tenement, rearing its head into the smoky sky, revealing its newness, yet already dirty, with its door broken in. He would have liked to go through the hallway to see whether the dirty little court yard, the heap of boxes, the red brick and Jimmie's home were still there, but he couldn't make up his mind to do so. He stood looking at the broken door, till some one came out and looked at him, then he hurried away. He came to old Jim Daniel's butcher shop. The horrible exhibition in the window was there, with the same design as if Jim had merely kept the dust off of it these three years. Jim, himself he did not see, nor did he have any desire to see him.

Turning there, he went west till he came to the

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little park. He crossed and recrossed it, looked anxiously at everybody he met there and went off to the house where Minnie used to live. He stood watching the people that went in and out for many minutes, then, tiring of that, walked away.

All morning he walked about between the river and the little park, passing the school, the shop building and the orphanage on the triangular space and the moving picture theatre that they used to frequent. Later in the afternoon, he paid his nickle and entered the little theatre. He selected a seat near the front of the stuffy room, and kept gazing around him as if he were looking for some one. People sitting about him stared back at him and he felt like one who is watched. He was sitting near the aisle and every time the usher passed him Carl trembled, for he wore a blue uniform with brass buttons, as if he had just come from the reformatory.

Calling himself "fool," he rose and walked to a more secluded seat, where fewer people were sitting. There he felt much better. The darkness and the presence of many silent beings were very soothing to him.

A robber was escaping St. Quentin prison on the screen. Carl sat forward in his seat and riveted his eyes upon the flashing pictures, enjoying immensely the daring deeds and, by virtue of his experience, feeling it all much more keenly than any other individual in the theatre. Breathlessly, he saw the convict strike the guard upon the head and kill him, and he delighted in it as if it were himself striking down the Colonel or Major Dunkin or one of the minor officers. Towards the end, the thing lost in conviction to him, the convict acted as no human being could have acted, and Carl sat back in his seat, disgusted.

The following number on the program was a love scenario and it ended with a wretchedly painted

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amateur vaudeville singer coming out upon the floor and singing a sentimental song while it was being illustrated on the screen with dreamy variegated scenes. To Carl it was like listening to strains coming from another world — a world as beautiful as his had been ugly. He shoved himself back in his seat. Half shutting his eyes, he followed every movement of the well dressed couple on the canvas. When it ended he woke as from a dream and applauded with all his energy, and when the final encore was sung and she retreated, throwing kisses from her ugly painted lips to the underworld audience, Carl rose like a drunken man and made his way out of the theatre, his heart filled with incomprehensible longings.

He had slept very little during the last few nights at the reformatory, and having been awake most of the night before, he was very sleepy. His stay in the warm, stuffy theatre had made him still more sleepy and he decided to go right home, and as he groped his way through the hazy world, he concluded that the great change that seemed to have come over everything, was a change that had really come upon himself. He was old now. Where had he been all the time in which those awful changes had taken place? He had been robbed of three long years. A great portion of his life had been smeared black with the devil's brush. He placed the responsibility for that robbery, that unatonable crime, upon the shoulders of the judge, the law and the reformatory officials, and if there had been any more room in his soul for hatred, he would have hated them more than ever.

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CHAPTER XVII.

Carl was employed by the new foreman and went to his work like a steer to the shambles. No one seemed to recognize him and he could recognize no one but the boy who had taken poor Willie Bradd's place, and he was so changed that it was necessary to question him considerably before Carl was sure of his identity. What could have happened to them? Was his memory so poor, or had the fellow really changed so much?

He was not anxious to have any one there recognize him. The hardest thing about his work during the first few days was his awful fear of being discovered and branded as a reformatory inmate, and he sought the minimum of intercourse with his workmates. He could not help being intimate with Pete Mulligan, because Pete, who had taken Willie Bradd's job, worked with him and their work depended upon each other.

Within a fortnight he felt as if he had never left that shop, as if his reformatory experience had been but a long black night from which he had awakened to go back to the shop. He worked because he had to, but never for one moment ceased to plan and to seek escape.

"What the devil did you get from all your working hard these three years?" he asked Peter one day at lunch.

Peter was red in the face chewing his sandwiches and his cheek, his chin and his temples moved harmoniously with the movement of his jaw. The question came as a surprise to Peter who, taking a good look at his companion, proceeded in dangerous haste to swallow down what he was chewing so that he could appropriately make his answer.

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"First of all," he began with a grin, "I've been workin' more'n three years. An' as to what I got, well, I got my sandwiches reg'lar an' good strong patches when m' pants gave way. Life without patches is a failin' business, you know."

Peter roared at his own humor. Carl smiled but not very enthusiastically.

"I have to keep on livin'," he continued, "So's Androon or Donald can make shirts enough. If I'd quit helpin' the shirt business, an' you'd quit helpin' in the shirt business an' the other fellow'd quit helpin' in the shirt business we'd soon all go around in our underwear and, by Gee, what would we do if the underwear fellows got huffy, hey? Clear, ain't it?"

"Clear as mud," retorted Carl.

"Gee, that's good," cried Peter, in his excitement shooting particles of the sandwich he was chewing all over the place, hitting Carl on the hand as if he had aimed at him.

Carl was tempted to suggest to him that if he were more economical with his sandwiches, he wouldn't have to work so hard, but while he hesitated, Peter started out again in a loud voice, "Well, old boy, you're quite right. Nothin' else to do though. Father can't support hisself, mother's workin' like a horse tryin' to feed the youngsters. I've got to do my share, have to support myself anyway, so might as well do it without grumblin'."

Carl resented the last remark. He thought Peter a big fool, and decided not to talk to him any more about the subject, but the argument was taken up again at almost every lunch time and the more they argued, the more he disliked Peter, the more fervently did he promise himself that he would not spend the rest of his life in the shop.

One day Carl asked him whether he had ever been

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to the country and Peter replied hastily, "Well, I've been to Central Park," and before he could make his intended addition, "and that's about as much of the country as anything I know of." Carl burst into a fit of laughter and after that he persecuted the poor simple Peter with frequent and poignant references to his knowledge of the country.

When because of that Peter found some better companions for his lunch hour, Carl was obliged to eat his lunch by himself, moping as he ate. At home neither Anna nor his mother could give him the companionship he craved. Matilda was eternally complaining of what her life was becoming, wrecked by so many ailments and the work she could not abandon, and Anna insisted that *her* life was much more lamentable than Matilda's; while Carl who considered his lot worse than that of either of them said nothing and kept away from home as much as possible. Night after night, he roamed the streets in search of George. Every address, every street number that floated through his brain, he went to investigate; but nowhere could he find as much as a clue to his whereabouts, and the few weeks of summer which he had hoped to spend wandering about with him, went by.

One evening after giving up the search for the night and starting home, he passed a drug-store in the neighborhood of the address which he carried in his mind, and saw Maggie enter it. He was sure that it was Maggie, though she was dressed much more gaudily than he had expected her to be; and stationing himself in an inconspicuous doorway, he waited for her appearance with beating heart.

She came out again fifteen minutes later. He was sure it was she, yet the clothes she wore made him somewhat doubtful, and, afraid of getting into trouble by speaking to her, he decided to follow her.

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She led him from street to street until she came to a brown stone house among a long row of other and similar brown stone houses on East One Hundred and Tenth Street, and began to ascend the stone steps of the stoop. It was already rather late, and the street was deserted. The silence made him take heart. He called out before she could unlock her door, "Is that you, Maggie?"

The young woman turned instantly and demanded, "Who are you?"

Assured beyond a doubt that he had been on the right track he cried, "Don't you know me, Maggie?"

Maggie made her way down the stairs till she came near enough to recognize him, then in a fit of delight grabbed his hand with both of hers and shook it violently.

"Where in the world do you come from?" she cried, "George'll be crazy for joy to see you. He found out that you left the old place long ago, and has been trying and trying and trying to find you."

Carl could hardly contain himself for joy. He followed her up the stairs, eagerly trembling with excitement.

They climbed up to the fourth and last floor. She opened the door into a lightless little kitchen and motioned Carl to be silent. He waited while she went into the front-room where he could see a light burning, and soon after George and Alice came running with her into the kitchen.

The meeting was hilarious. They fell upon each other and danced and jumped for joy. George was beside himself with happiness, and Carl had all he could do to keep the tears back.

The flat consisted of five rooms, a kitchen, a front-room, a reception room, and two bedrooms. But for the two bedrooms which he saw on his way to the

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front-room, and which were rather neatly kept, the rest of the flat might have been taken for an artist's studio. The furniture was odd and things seemed very much neglected.

In the front-room they found comfortable seats and all talked at once, exchanging whole chapters of information and staring at each other and laughing boisterously.

Alice was as gaudily dressed as her partner in the establishment, and Carl felt somewhat estranged towards her. George too seemed very much changed. He had never seen him dressed as he was and he looked queer to him, but there was another reason for his looking queer. George was paler than he had ever known him to be and not half so robust.

The three of them had a short conference and then announced to Carl that they were going to stay home that night, that they expected him to stay there over night with them, and that they were going to have a good time in his honor.

And it was a very good time that they had and it would have taken more than mere moral suasion to convince Carl that it was not so good a time as he thought it was. To him that night was the happiest night he had ever had, and he would have sold his mother and Anna and all the rest of his life for the joys it gave him. He wanted joy, he wanted pleasure, his soul cried out for it. That's what he had hungered for all his days and nights.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Matilda sat up till two o'clock waiting for his return, weeping when awake and sleeping when her eyes would remain open no longer. "God's punish-

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ment," she said a thousand times that night, going off into restless sleep with the phrase on her lips.

Anna was sorry for her next morning and tried to comfort her, but couldn't do it. Not only could she think of nothing with any relief value that she could say to her, but the emptiness of her own hard existence was chocking her. She too was as unhappy as she could be. She ate very little and ran off to the shop spending a most miserable day, gnawed by her own moping and by fears for Matilda. When she reached home that night wan and exhausted, every bone in her body aching and saw Matilda silently consuming herself in worriment, she was possessed once more by a great and terrible desire to put an end to her life, restrained from weeping or from bursting out with the expression of her feelings, by its possible effect on Matilda whom a healthy breath might have blown over.

"No sign of him?" asked Anna, her face showing the agony and irritation within.

Matilda shook her head negatively and said nothing.

Anna sat for awhile, too tired and overburdened and impatient to begin a conversation, yet feeling that unless one was started, she would go mad under the strain of the depressing silence. But Matilda was dumb with grief.

"For God's sake, Matilda," cried Anna, unable to sit still any longer, "can't you say something?"

Matilda turned to look at her hastily, her eyes fairly bulging out of her head with terror, yet she could get herself to say nothing.

"I'm sick of it," Anna burst forth again, shaking with nervousness, her face wet with tears, "I'm sick of it. It's all nothing, nothing, nothing. I can't stand it any more."

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Matilda trembled. She just could not speak. Her face bore the expression of ultimate despair.

"Matilda," cried Anna again, rising and going over to the table and seating herself opposite her. "Forget about him. You are killing yourself. I just can't stand to see it any more. You have done all in your power for him. Let us go away where you'll never hear from him again. Let him sink or swim with the thousands of others like him."

"Oh, Anna, don't talk like that," said Matilda, the tears rolling down her marble face, "He's had no chance. You've said so yourself. When I think of the little body I carried in my arms and the little feet—"

Anna saw that her argument had not only been useless but that it had been foolish and she said no more about it, seating herself on the rocker again. What little in her sudden outburst had been experimental proved to be futile. There was no change in Matilda. Anna rallied her strength and her courage and tried once more to save Matilda, who, she felt, was visibly and momentarily wasting away.

They were suddenly interrupted by a knock on the door and Anna jumped to her feet, while Matilda sat up motionlessly.

It was Mr. Williams, the new probation officer, a kindly faced old man who had come to find out how Carl was getting along.

"He's not very happy, but he's making the best of it," said Matilda, trying to draw back within her the agony expressed on her face.

"He's working, isn't he?" asked the officer.

"Oh, yes," said Matilda, "he's working."

"Well, then," said Mr. Williams, "so long he's working. We aren't any of us very happy."

"No, I guess not," cried Anna, rocking herself rather violently.

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"It's a funny world, isn't it?" said Mr. Williams. "It's horrible and yet there's so much in it worth the fight."

"I don't see anything in it worth the fight," cried Anna.

"Oh, yes, yes. There is a great deal. You must go look for it, my friend. You can't find it sitting within your own four walls always. Now look here, my job isn't one that is conducive to happiness. I see enough every day to make me miserable for a week, if I want to look at it that way, don't you know, but I just tell myself, it will all, this great big mistake, it will all come right some day. We must all plug away and do the best we can and try to get what we can out of each moment, don't you know."

Anna rocked herself and thought it all over.

"There is a great deal that is worth while in this world, my friend," repeated the new probation officer, then writing something into his book, added, "So he's doing well, is he? That's good."

The probation officer went away, but the light his somewhat wrinkled face and grayish hair left in the little kitchen, was still there. Just the presence of his kindly old face and the bit of sympathy offered so softly and so beautifully, brought great relief to them and they spent the rest of the evening trying to find the things in life worth living for and offering blessings upon all good old men.

CHAPTER XIX

Carl awoke, as it were, from a week of dissipation with a feeling very much like that which he used to experience after a tug-of-war between the different members of his gang. The rope would break and he

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would fall with several other boys on top of him. He used to get up when the other youngsters allowed him to, feeling dizzy, tired, and suffering a severe headache, but would be smiling just the same and often was at once ready to take part in another tug-of-war. So he felt on this particular day. The strength seemed to have been sapped out of him, his head was very heavy, and his eyes were half closed. He had been up all hours of the night and had been drinking and smoking like the rest of them—all three of them. He had ever had the desires that had led him to that dissipation and he hoped that after awhile, after a bit of rest, their intensity would return. During all the thousand days and nights of his life he had been called upon to restrain those desires, to keep them in check, to hide them, to drive them back into his blood. There was no intelligence back of his inhibition. Even as he denied himself the satisfaction for which he hungered, for fear of punishment, his mind was constantly at work stimulating those desires, and so they grew more and more undeniable as he grew.

Naturally enough, when the week came when there was no need for restraint, he attempted to balance his accounts with life by going to the wildest excess. But at the end of that week it came upon him with the dull pain of satiety that it was not as all satisfying as his restraint had led him to believe it would be—that the something somewhere that he was seeking, had not yet been reached. A vague longing possessed him to continue seeking, but he sensed no direction and there was no one about to inquire from or to volunteer to direct him.

"I've got to go to see a fellow, to-night," he told Alice on Friday night, the eighth day after his disappearance from home, and no amount of coaxing could swerve him from his decision. "He was good

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to me. He loaned me ten dollars when I needed it badly and I said I'd give it back to him the next week. It's three weeks now and I haven't even gone to see him. He helped me out a lot."

"But why can't you come back to-night?" she pleaded with him, putting her arms about his neck just as the purest loving sweetheart would have done, "You know after working around all the evening with all those old fools, I like to see you when I get home. George'll be here for Mag, an' I'll be alone again."

"See, I can't. This fellow, my friend, lives in the same house as my mother. I can't go there an' run off again, I got to stay over night."

Alice was finally convinced that he did have to stay over night and to show him that she wanted to be good to him, she forced him to take a ten dollar bill with which to pay his friend.

They kissed each other good-bye. He promised to meet her the following evening at Androon's cafe, and went off feeling very much relieved to be alone again.

Near the elevator station, he walked into a candy-store and bought a box of candy.

Anna had come home with a sick headache and had gone to bed immediately after supper; while Matilda, grumbling, sighing, weeping, and talking to herself, went on doing some of the work which her weakness had not allowed her to finish in the daytime.

Carl rapped on the kitchen door. His mother, a shawl about her stooping shoulders, her wild, sleepless eyes showing bewilderment, her face deathly pale, opened the door. Her heart beat with gladness at sight of him, but her face, wrung with grief, showed no sign of that gladness.

"Hello, mother," he said with a tremor in his voice, but she could not answer him. She turned her eyes away immediately upon recognizing him at the

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door and went back to her work without a word. But Carl did not blame her and was not angry at her.

He walked up to the table and placed the neatly wrapped package upon it, mumbling something to the effect that it was for her.

She wanted to know whether he wanted something to eat, and answering in the negative, he seated himself at the table opposite her.

She would have liked to give vent to her feelings and tell him how wrong she thought he acted, but the box of candy had placed a damper upon those feelings, much as she thought the very act of buying candy to be wrong, when they needed money for bread, as it were. She glanced at him several times furtively. He was gazing down upon the floor. She discovered a trace of sadness on his face—a weariness she had not seen there before. He reminded her so much of his father, she looked at him again and again and each time furtively. She saw her baby's face there too. Saw it as it had looked up at her from out the flames of fever and she longed passionately for the impossible opportunity of placing her arms about him and touching his forehead with her cheek as she used to do way back in the receding spaces of time.

"Mr. Williams was here the other day," she told him.

"What did he have to say?"

"He wanted to know all about you and said that the reformatory could take you back there any time they pleased."

"He's a dirty liar," cried Carl, keeping down his anger as much as he could, "They ain't goin' to make a slave out of me forever."

He ceased there, and sank back into his former calmness, realizing that the braggardism of his reply

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was too obviously meaningless, and that they did hold a formidable power over him.

"I told him a lie," said Matilda softly with a touch of resentment in her voice. "I told him that you were working and that you go out every evening."

"What did he say to that?" Carl asked, betraying in his manner of speech his gratitude for the services she had rendered him.

"He put it down as good, but how long do you think he will do that?"

"Well, if he wants to see me, ask him to tell you when he's coming again, and I'll be here."

"Sure," said Matilda faltering, "a great chance I have for making appointments for you. To-morrow you'll go way and forget all about me again."

Matilda had never appealed to him in that tone of voice and in that submissive manner before. Always it had been with an air of authority that she advised him or commanded him to do as she wanted him to do. She was treating him now as if he were a man with something to say about things. Was it because she had to? Because she was afraid to do otherwise? She did treat him as if he were "somebody" now. He had grown, and he was proud and glad of it.

"I don't forget you," he answered looking down at his shoes.

Tears began to crawl down Matilda's cheeks and she purposely turned her face toward the window every now and then so that he should see them and be compassionate.

"Oh, yes," she sighed, "if you wouldn't be forgetting me, I'd be a much happier woman than I am."

"I *don't* forget you," he insisted, putting his right hand into his pocket.

"What do you call this then. You have a mother and a home, and you go living out as if this wasn't

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clean enough for you or as if I didn't exist at all. And you know how hard we are struggling here to keep this little home."

Carl stretched his legs out before him as far as they could go. His face assumed the expression of, "You can't understand." Gazing down at his legs he answered her, "I didn't forget you. I brought you ten dollars to-night and will try to bring you that every month."

"I had been hoping all along," began Matilda trying hard to conceal her delight with that information, "that when you'd grow up, you'd care enough for me to be with me and to work with me. I thought that together we might climb out of all this misery, but I see now that it was a vain hope. Here you are leaving me, and I'm growing old watching you."

Carl made no reply and by the way he looked when he stared out of the window, Matilda felt that she had gone off in the wrong direction and said no more about it. In everything she said to him after that and in preparing his bed for him, she showed him how she really felt towards him, and he tried to show her that he was grateful.

He went to bed happy that she had not objected to his staying away as strenuously as he had expected her to, and she went to bed still worrying, but very much happier and more hopeful, promising herself to find out next day just what his work was.

She slept with Anna, and when she got to bed, Anna awoke.

"I want to tell you something, Anna," she whispered, "Carl came home."

"Good," said Anna, with evident gladness, showing that in spite of what she had said to comfort or pacify Matilda, she had really been concerned about him.

"Yes, he's been working. He brought me ten dol-

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lars and promised to bring me ten dollars every month. He brought you a nice box of candy."

"Isn't that lovely," said Anna, "see, and yet you worried yourself to death."

"You have no idea how changed he is."

"In what way do you mean?"

"He looks so much older and more settled. He looked so much like his father to-night. Oh, Anna, you don't know how it has made me feel!"

"You ought to be happy now."

"I felt just as if I saw his father, walk right in."

CHAPTER XX.

After breakfast next day, Carl began to wonder why he had been so anxious to get away from the little flat, up-town.

Towards noon, his longing for his companions became intense. He told his mother he didn't work on Saturdays and Sundays, and when pressed so that he could no longer escape answering, he told her that he waited on the table in a "swell" cafe.

He couldn't stay home very long The morning he spent wondering about his old haunts. The afternoon he spent in the moving picture theatre, but for some reason he did not enjoy it as he usually did. An exciting train robbery did not excite him at all. A young vaudeville clown ridiculing an imaginary lover, annoyed him very much and the humor the foolish clown poured forth after that had anything but a humorous effect upon him; but a young lover writhing in agony, on the screen, because his sweetheart was to marry his rival, a villain whom he hated, brought the tears to Carl's eyes. When a prettily made up girl came out upon the stage and sang about a broken-hearted young

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lady who pined away because the one she loved, "loved another," he felt that he would give "anything" if that could bring Alice to his side, and promised himself never to leave her for so long a time again. He experienced all the heart pangs the broken-hearted young lady in the song had felt, and then, as if the song were an evil omen, imagining all kinds of catastrophes to the little home and to Alice, he left the theatre nervous and worried and started in great haste for One Hundred and Tenth Street.

It took him a long time to get there, so it seemed to him, and all sorts of things happened to the elevated railroad to delay it.

He finally reached the particular station for which he was making, and when an old lady and her daughter directly in front of him on the stairway, reached the sidewalk and gave him the chance to escape, he dashed away as if some one were after him.

A sickening sense of disappointment took hold of him when, after climbing the stairs, he could get no reply to his knocking on the door. There was nothing to do but to wander about the streets until midnight.

He arrived at Androon's cafe an hour earlier than he should have and sat down at a table in the corner made by a projection in the wall and ordered a bottle of beer, a sandwich, and a box of cigarettes. He manipulated his bottle as if he had been accustomed to beer bottles all his life and smoked his cigarettes with a grace that would have done credit to an expert smoker, curling the smoke through his nostrils and weaving a greenish mist about him through which he could gaze at the softened lines and colors and hear the deafening racket of cabaret dancers.

He was happily disturbed in his reverie by the appearance of George who came in upon him through the dull, noisy, reddish confusion.

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"What's the matter with you?" George asked him as he sat down opposite him, rubbing his forehead then added, "I guess you feel as I do."

"How do you feel?" Carl asked, puffing his cigarette.

"I don't feel just right. I don't know what's the matter."

He, too, ordered some beer and took some of Carl's cigarettes, and as the two of them sat, pale with dissipation, and listless enough to prefer sitting silently, Maggie appeared and sat down with them. She told Carl that Alice was not feeling well in a room up-stairs and Carl would under no circumstances wait until she had ordered her drink but prevailed upon her to take him up there at once.

The cafe was crowded with smoking men and women of the cafe-frequenting type, painted and powdered horribly, wearing large, loud-colored hats with feathers and plumes, laughing boisterously and drinking heavily.

Through the aisles Maggie led him brushing roughly against sleek-groomed waiters who ran about as if the existence of the universe were threatened by their losing a moment in the delivery of the stuff which some foolish couple had ordered.

They reached a side door which took them into the hallway. On the first floor going up they passed a well lit small room the door of which was partly open. Carl could see very distinctly the features of a half drunken man as he sat near the table over an open box. The table and the floor were littered with excelsior, paper, and bottles, and the door of the huge safe back of him stood wide open.

They went on up to the next floor and Maggie told him that the man he had seen in the little room was the rich Mr. Androon himself.

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"I wish I had some of his money," said Carl.

"You bet," agreed Maggie, "he's the meanest man I ever heard of too. He's making it all the time and all he does is drink."

On the fourth and last floor, Maggie stopped before a door, rapped three times and listened. Alice asked her to come in.

The room in which Alice lay was not very clean and rather poorly furnished. A white iron bed, a wash stand with a pitcher and basin on it, and a single chair constituted the furniture. The walls were bare and up in one corner some one had years ago stuck an old deserted bird's nest, and no one had ever taken the trouble to take it down again. The window was fitted with translucent glass and the lower half of it was covered with a dusty curtain.

Alice lay stretched out upon her bed with her arms crossed over her face. Maggie greeted her, then left them to themselves and hurried down below again.

Alice knew that Carl stood near the bed and looked down at her, but did not move. To Carl she was the personification of loveliness, and blessed be the force that was responsible for that notion. Into the moldy wrecks of such beings, that force brings the only touch of the great light. Would that it had even more and greater illusionment to give to those who otherwise have nothing.

Carl bent over her and pressed a kiss upon her lips, and she began to rub her eyes and to stare smilingly at him.

"What's the matter?" he asked concernedly

"Oh, nothin'." she replied, "a little tired."

Carl kissed her again and again and she took his hand and pressed it tightly against her bosom as if her heart were paining her and smiled as if the touch of his hand relieved it.

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"You don't sleep enough," he admonished.

"We'll sleep lots to-morrow."

Carl showered his love upon her, and Alice truly happy, took the opportunity to express the little fear that flashed into her mind and out of it, every once in awhile. She was a few years younger than her sister and had it not been for her sister she would not have had the strength, the fearlessness rather, to enter into the profession which she now plied so efficiently. Not even Maggie could have entered the profession with so little initiation if her pilgrimages to the city from the reformatory hadn't forced her into a condition which made her turning to that profession the only means of escape.

Carl showered his love upon Alice and though her heart beat with appreciation she could not help but voice the fear that womanhood by virtue of her unjustly dependent position carries with it through life.

"You like me now," she said in a barely audible whisper, "but if I get sick an' ugly an' look like some of the hags on the street, you—"

"Oh, no," Carl interrupted her. That was impossible!

The fervor with which he said it convinced her that he was right and she felt better They decided to go home and down-stairs found George and Maggie very glad to follow them.

It was an exceptionally cool autumn night, and the gray sky and cutting wind came like the advance guard of a gnawing winter. Carl buttoned his coat and saw to it that Alice had her coat buttoned, and drawing his hat down over his forehead, they hurried along thinking of the warm flat.

They came upon a corner where they saw a young fellow of the species of loafer in whom environment has dried up every drop of decency or consideration,

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that resembles so much the garden weed which the gardner pulls up by the roots and throws down to rot and to give its putrefactious odors to the wind; for society has indeed plucked them by the roots and allows them to rot in its very midst to poison the air with their rotting.

He recognized Alice with whom he had spent the night before. In a world where everybody claims the right to judge and condemn though everybody reeks with sin, this rotting creature felt he had the right to voice his opinion of one so much lower down the scale than himself because of her dependence, and since he had the strength to back up his right, he proceeded to enjoy it and expressed his wormy contempt with all the power and poignancy of his wormy vocabulary. This utterly depraved creature who had stolen the money with which he had paid for the satisfaction of his desire found in society the encouragement to spit upon her who had given him the opportunity to satisfy his passion which might otherwise have wreaked itself upon some one more fortunate than she.

Carl was beside himself with fury. Not only was the girl who had been so vilely insulted the object of his love, but protecting her was his duty, the duty that earned his bread for him; and though the fellow was bigger than he was, Carl hurried back to where he was standing and with all his strength dug into him.

But Carl had not seen the other four gangsters that were seated in a dark doorway, and before he had gone very far in the desperate struggle, he found himself fighting five of them. The fight was not a fair one, and had he taken to his heels, it would not have been as much of an ignominious thing to do as he thought it would. The pain he felt only fanned his flaming desire to give back as he was given.

Something sharp and pointed missed opening his

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skull by mere accident and Carl switched about in a determined impulse to save himself. Falling upon the armed man, somewhat smaller than he was, he grabbed the hand that held the knife, and disregarding the blows and kicks that came from other directions, he sank his teeth into the fingers till he had possession of the weapon.

A blow on the head sent him to the sidewalk, but he was on his feet again in an instant, and, brandishing his knife, he slashed right and left till even George, who had joined the fight in his behalf, received a deep gash in the palm of his right hand. When the first police officer summoned, had arrived, Carl had cleared a circular space about him and with his threatening, illegally long blade, dared any one to approach him.

Taking him for a mad man the officer centered his attention upon him, unwittingly giving all the rest a chance to escape.

Carl realized the precariousness of his condition as soon as the sight of the officer brought him to his senses, but he was at too high a pitch of excitement to know that the best thing he could do was to surrender. Instinct told him to run, and he did run till the officer's night stick sent him to the sidewalk in a heap. The second officer arrived.

He regained his consciousness and began to plead with his captors like a sick child, but even as he pleaded they sent in a call for the patrol wagon, and when it arrived took him away from where he had fallen deserted by even those he loved.

In vain he tried to prove to the magistrate that the knife was not his, that he had been attacked and that he had merely protected himself. With the obscure distant feeling that the truth might make him free he told the truth, told just why he had been at-

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tacked, but although that influenced the magistrate, it did not make him free.

He was held for trial, but he had little hope in a trial. He had told the truth and no one listened to him, what difference would the trial make? He had no money, no witnesses, and a bad record. The state gave him a lawyer, but everything he offered for evidence, the impatient lawyer threw out as useless. Facts he knew to be true, the lawyer claimed, would only incriminate him. There was nothing, absolutely nothing in his favor save his deeply sad and hopeless face, a good face in spite of his record.

In desperation he disregarded his lawyer's advice and demanded an opportunity to state his case. The opportunity was given him and he pleaded from the bottom of his heart, but his words for the most part fell on deaf ears.

The judge was lenient and gave the defendent from two years to two years and six months in the state penitentiary. His offence had been so grave that the jurisdiction of the reformatory officials was overstepped and Carl went straight to Sing Sing, the next step in his development.

The light in the court room went out for Carl with the utterance of that sentence. He knew himself to be innocent. The law had its grip upon him and would never free him. What was he to do? In his effort to think up an answer to that question, he submitted to the passing of sentence and the trip north, and arrived at his destination, his heart loaded down with grief and his brain taut to the point of rupture.

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CHAPTER XXI.

His whole mentality—sensations, perceptions, illusions, hallucinations, judgments, memories, and lifeless hope—was poisoned with the most bitter passionate hatred. He was a shadow thrust into a black world through whose gloomy sky streamed the dying rays of an unreachable light. There was no truth in the world. The thing that called itself justice was the most unjust thing in existence, utterly incapable of sensing the truth when that was offered. Back of the wrong doings of which he had been guilty, he had legitimate reasons, and excusing those wrong-doings because of those reasons, he considered himself innocent. His sentence was persecution. He had been sinned against, misunderstood, hounded. If only he could strike back and strike back effectively—that was the whole problem, and he had two years in which to solve it.

Once more the clinking of keys began the accompaniment of the dirge of his existence. The sweet, evanescent taste of liberty, like a thing that never was, melted away obliviously, and every fibre of his body assumed the task of vigilance. Every move was watched and no movement was executed without the inevitable, insolent, instructions, of some heartless guard or keeper.

Hard slimy stone for walls and bed and freedom. Ill-smelling, soggy stuff for food! Vermin-infested beds that turned his warm nights into torturous trials of Job, and his cold nights into hours of penance of ascetic monks without the relief of their fanaticism! There were moments of madness when he first arrived at the prison when it seemed to him more worth while to fight back and suffer than to submit to those he hated, and every one of those moments earned ever

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more pain until the greater pain shoved the resistance back down the throat of his soul; and falling and fainting in his struggle, he learned to keep his thoughts and feelings to himself—to submit.

There was a dungeon at the penitentiary compared with which the reformatory "coop" was as a parlor. The first taste of that dungeon nearly wrecked his mind.

Every step he took on that first trip down, down, and down was a hammer blow upon his brain. When he reached the black hole, he weakened, was reduced to a state of abject cowardice. He whimpered like a baby. The terror of being locked up in that sepulcher was worse than death to him. It was being buried alive. But he was forced down, like an animal about to be slaughtered, and when the dreadful iron door closed upon him, he amused the guards by weeping and begging, to which they paid as much attention as they did to the mad beating of the Hudson upon the bleakest rocks in its course.

He pleaded and implored and promised, but the mocking echoes in the death-infested corridors made the only reply. He continued begging, sending his words out with accelerated rapidity and intensified emotion as the foot-falls receded, and came to a climax when the last sound of them died out. Then he fell back, as it were, into a violent fit of profanity. He cursed and cursed aloud and bitterly and vilely and his cursing peopled the dungeon hell with the most devilish voiced phantoms. All that was black in his soul came out in the stream that poured from him till in agony and despair, he groaned again and wept and the tears rolling down his cheeks dug deep into them. He would have relinquished anything his imagination had ever possessed, for one moment's freedom.

He threw himself with all his might as trapped

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animals do in their struggles with death. His mind reached the state of that of the trapped animal that becomes capable of gnawing off its own leg to gain freedom, but he was in so much more hopeless a condition, he couldn't bite his leg off for biting it off would have no effect upon his slavery.

When he had done all the raving and spitting and biting and throwing himself against the door that he could, when he had come to the point of physical exhaustion and his brain, on fire, began to tear at the walls of his cranium, he hurried off that course in fear of going mad and made an attempt to console himself. The two years would pass. By being careful he would avoid going to the dungeon again. Other people have lived through a hundred such nights, he would live through it too. He made a list of all the things he would do, then tore up the list, as it were, "I can't do anything." The law was against him. They had his record and no matter how he had suffered for it, no matter how dearly he had paid for it, they would never erase it. There was but one thing he could do—go off somewhere. Go to a new country off in the great world somewhere, where no one would know him, and where his record would not count against him.

George and Alice could not have helped him, he reasoned, and yet, every time he thought of them, he experienced pangs of disappointment—they had deserted him.

He kept himself thinking, for as he thought, he saved himself from dwelling upon the horrible darkness of the dungeon or the phantom creatures that slid about on the slimy walls. At times he would decide that there was "no use talking," that he was in the most hopeless condition and that he might as well die fighting "them" in the attempt to save himself as to die slowly through tortures like these he was endur-

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ing; while at other times, when the climax of his hopelessness had been reached, to keep from going crazy, he would give himself something to desire to live for. He would get hold of George as soon as he was freed. Now that he was older, two years would go faster than they did when he was at the reformatory. With George he would skip the country, go aboard some vessel, and if possible they would take the girls with them.

He thought of his mother and of Anna and the conditions that were killing them. He wished he might help them but knew of no way. How could they all escape without money? Yet they must not remain living as they were. He began to plan getting money, but always as soon as he had his plan made, it fell to pieces. He sank back into a sick, drowsy, hopelessness, and in the penumbra of his thoughts, the shadowy thoughts of his drowsy fearful condition, he saw the figure of Androon sitting in his little room, drinking some newly ordered liquor, the door of his huge safe open. This was the only picture in Carl's imagination that offered any real practical solution. He saw himself frightening Androon and getting him to "hand over" his money. He went into details and the further he went the more practical the plan seemed. It was a good plan—the only plan that could really be worked. The thought of succeeding with it made him restless. How he longed for the day, so distant, when he could execute that plan. He went through the process over and over again and the pictures that it incited were balm to his sore, wounded being.

But the night was so long. His cramped position on the spikey floor, savagely designed to torment, sent him up on his feet again. He stood till he couldn't stand any longer and then sat down with a desire to scream at the top of his voice. But he was afraid of

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his own voice and the desire to scream was dissipated in a horrible groan. His brain was harried by the childish fear of darkness and his head was hot with fever. He began to think of all the horrible stories he had ever heard about men locked up in dungeons. He got up on his feet again. His limbs were weak and ached with the position they had been forced to take. His agony was intense. His thoughts stormed. Unable to endure it any longer he screamed at the top of his voice. His voice sounded horrible through the corridor and it seemed to him that immediately following it, he heard the squeak of a rat.

He had planned to force himself to sleep, but with the thought of rats he abandoned his plan. How could he sleep with the stories he had heard of mice eating men, dramatized in his terrified brain. He listened attentively and always just as he would tell himself that he had been mistaken, that he had not heard any rats, and would turn about, his excited imagination would hear the squeak, and for a dozen or more minutes he would listen again breathlessly. He breathed heavily, he groaned, he threw himself with all his waning force against the iron door, but back of every sound he made was the squeak of a rat. When he was silent, they out of fear were silent too, and listened when he listened.

He cursed and swore, sat down, and jumped up, moaning and groaning and pressing his bursting head against the door. If he could only lay his hands on the principal keeper, he would dig them into his throat, he would drag him into the cell when he opened the door, he would bite and tear him to pieces. It was a consoling thought but it exhausted him. If he could accidentally set a match to the guard that had got him into trouble! What a delight it would be to see him burn, to hear him cry for help. Yes, sir, he would be

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willing to explode a bomb and shatter every brick in the place, and the thought of scattered bits of guards and keepers was pleasant enough to make him forget the bits that it would blow him into.

Can't something be done? He struggled with the door again for a while. It was all useless, the whole eternal tugging. Oh, the agony of eternally tugging! Would he be tugging even after death, or would death stop his tugging—but death was so terrible he drove the thought out of his mind.

"It must be morning already. The night can't be so long." It was more than a night. It might have been a night and a day, a week, for all he knew. How could it have been a week? They hadn't brought him any bread and water yet. Why hadn't they brought him any bread and water yet? Were they trying to starve him? Were they trying to kill him, to get rid of him? No one would know the difference. The prison doctor would say he died of heart trouble. "Oh the———murderers!" Oh, if he could put his hands on their throats, he would be willing to die then.

He tried to sleep, but it was impossible. There was no way of sleeping, one couldn't stand, one couldn't sit. He could smash his head against the wall. He thought of what would happen if he smashed his head against the wall and then the thought filled him with more and greater terror. He got down on his knees and felt the floor with its brutal rivet heads. There was no chance whatever of sleeping there. He wouldn't sleep, anyway. Suppose the rats came to gnaw at him. They must be hungry rats.

"Can it be that morning hasn't come yet? But where's the bread and water?"

He sat and stood for hours. He was sure he had sat and stood for hours and the hours went so slowly. He would try to sleep. He must sleep. If the rats

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should come to gnaw at him, their gnawing would wake him up and he ought to be stronger than a rat, than two rats, than a dozen rats. He would yell and his yell would drive them away.

He dozed off. He had been dozing a long time, it seemed, then suddenly woke with a start that lifted him from the floor. He had heard something frightful. Some thing terrible! He had never heard anything like it!

Through the prison had run the howling shrieks of a whole world of mad men, and great wheels were heard grinding, like peals of thunder. The howl had come from everywhere, from the walls, from the floor, from hell below. It still echoed in the corridors. The place was haunted, or he was going crazy. He rushed at the door and listened with beating heart to assure himself that he wasn't crazy. What could it have been? Could it be that he had howled himself? He howled again and he howled with all his might, and he half cried as he howled—he was mad beyond a doubt.

A voice came from the other end of the corridor. "Hey there, Billie, goin' to keep on yellin' all day?"

"Hey," he cried back almost hilariously. "Who are you?"

"A damned son-of-a-gun like yourself."

It was the dearest, sweetest voice he had ever heard. It was hoarse and rattling. It came from a dying man.

Carl broke into a veritable fit and a stream of vituperation poured from his mouth—he didn't care who heard him—with foamy, frothy anger, interspersed with flashes of brilliant sunlight, like the foam on the seashore, lit by the sunlight-like happiness at the nearness of a human being.

The veteran soldier on the bloody battle of the underworld, ridiculed him, laughed at him, but his

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ridicule was sweet to hear and his laughter was like music. It was coarse and hoarse like the voice of a dying consumptive, but it was human.

"It's day already, ain't it?"

"In some places."

"What was the screamin' about?"

"What the devil," the man stopped as if he had lost his breath, "weren't you screamin'?"

"I know what I screamed for," said Carl lying, "but what the devil were you screamin' for? What was the whole damn place screechin' for?"

The man did not answer. He was too weary to desire to speak and he felt that speaking would do no good.

"What the devil was it all about, hey?" Carl insisted.

"They killed a poor son-of-a-gun like you an' me."

"How'd they kill him?" cried Carl trembling.

"Oh, Hell," said the man with impatience, "On the damned electric chair."

That silenced Carl. He was sorry he had insisted on knowing. So that's what it was. They put a fellow into the electric chair and "turned on the juice." He had heard that expression and had laughed at it, but it took his voice away then. Into his sickened brain rushed a sea of new sensations and colors—a sea of blood and pain and agony—a conglomeration of memories—the butcher shop, dead pigs, headless chickens and the black and red mutilated form of Mrs. Valey's brother under the heap of black and red mutilated forms.

Carl sat and stood up for hours, silently, after that. It was a relief to him to know that there was another human being somewhere in the blackness near him, but talking was too great an exertion.

Then came the sound of foot-falls and Carl de-

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tested them and welcomed them. Was he convinced of the importance of obedience? What a question! The trouble that he took to assure the keeper that he was, disgusted the dying veteran.

Carl was taken back from hell to purgatory. The principal keeper was satisfied just as Colonel Mohtin in the "elementary school" had been satisfied, and just as Carl had then become a model inmate, so now he had been transformed into a "model" prisoner in the "advanced institution of learning."

CHAPTER XXII.

It was a long time before the keeper found it necessary to put Carl into "jail" again. He did everything asked of him, and no matter how bitterly he may have felt within, he took care not to show how he felt. The desire to fight back, the desire to show resentment fought against his will power, experience and reason, and the result of that struggle could have been seen upon his face—a dull, stolid expression with a sneakiness about his eyes and a sickening, half-hearted smile.

He was put to work in the tailor shop and worked willingly. If his strength hadn't failed him towards evening, he would have preferred working way into the night. Sundays were the worst days in the month, and the only redeeming feature about them was that like mile-stones on the road, they helped to show that time, much as it dragged along, was passing. He figured out the number of Sundays he would have to spend there, then he figured out the number of months and then jumped back to the number of days, and the magnitude of his numbers often overwhelmed him. At night in his narrow cell the number and the endless stretch of time that it signified, often brought the tears

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to his eyes. Carl wept a great deal, but no one ever saw him weep. He had a great deal of power over that tendency and could stop himself at will. If a shadow crossed his door and there was a possibility of some one's coming into his cell for any reason, in that instant every tear was gone and the dull prison expression spread over his face.

Matilda came to see him on the first visiting day, but weeping as she spoke, she told him that she could not come again in six months or a year—the fare was great. She didn't earn in a week what it cost her to pay him a single visit.

Neither Alice, nor George ever came to see him and their apparent indifference embittered his solitary moments and he felt that he should never forgive them.

Carl prayed, but no one saw him pray. The hour before retiring, before going to sleep, he spent in prayer of a sort. With his face dug into his folded arms he would bring from the land of recollections image after image and offer his silent prayer to each. Sometimes the hour of prayer and devotion left him so broken-hearted that by force it extended itself through most of the night. One time he was wandering over his school-days, and came upon Minnie in the park. He took her to old lady Valey's candy-store and once more pressed his forehead against her warm neck. After that night, the park and the candy-store became his Mecca. Every prayer was uttered with his face in that direction, and the pilgrimages thither were as numerous as his nights. Of all his life's experiences, *that* stood out as having been most worth while and he cursed the fate that brought it to such an untimely death. Yet so had his life been since that time, that had Minnie herself appeared; had she come in reality and stood in the doorway of his tomb, he should

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have dispelled the expression of prayer and sorrow from his face, replaced it by his usual prison look and the words he should have uttered would have been few and meaningless. The prisoner trusts no man. He tells a hard-luck story and confesses to the most intimate errors, when that story or that confession helps towards a desired end, but his soul is seldom seen. The longer the sentence he serves, the deeper goes that soul into the most solitary of confinements, and there comes a time when it has gone so deep that it can never come up again.

Matilda came to see him again after the eighth month had gone. She seemed to be resigned to his fate and hers, and told a number of things concerning herself that tortured him every night after that till she came the third time. He thought he had heard her say that she would not live long, that her lungs were in a bad condition and that she was getting too weak to make the trip. He admonished himself. It was all his fault. Because of his laziness he had not stuck to his work. Had he stuck to his work he would never have gone to the reformatory and would have been saved all the horrors he had had to endure ever since.

When Matilda came again, she was in a better mood and left him happier. He had written to her and asked her in the warmest language to come to see him again, and she had sacrificed the amount it cost her to do so and had come the second month after the last visit. She felt better. She had been reinstated at Mr. Donald's shop and was saving money so that as soon as he got out he could do something with it to start in business or go away from New York, as he himself had suggested. She brought good news this time, too, concerning George. George had called on Matilda and told her that he was getting along very

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nicely, that he was anxious to see Carl but that he thought he didn't dare show himself at the prison, for the authorities might still be after him, his father having instigated their search.

When his mother left him he went back to his cell to spend the rest of his day in prayer—his kind of prayer. Her coming had relieved his worrying but had intensified his longings to get out and his prayer was a most restless one.

His food, soggy and unappetizing, disgusted him and, hungry as he was, he could not eat it that night. The little fruit his mother had brought him he ate, and blessed her as he ate it, but that merely sharpened his appetite. The tea was as horrible as it always was, but his desire to have something warm go down his throat made him gulp it down.

With the exception of two more solitary confinements and a few more visits from Matilda, who came twice accompanied by Anna, Carl's life of tailoring was a sort of subconscious life, the life of a mole. He became so accustomed to his work that he could go on dreaming even as he sewed, and the days as they came and went left nothing new in his mind. When the last few months of his term were brightened by the hope and desire to get out, the period he had spent atoning for his alleged crime became black and indistinct. It had been a period of great suffering, of endless and consuming longings, of toil and physical discomfort, and he was glad to be able to forget it, or at least to shove it back on the shelf, as it were, and give himself over to the brighter end of his sentence, the other end of the black tunnel, the lighted other end. He was approaching that end, and felt the joy only they can feel who, having groped through the darkness of a cave, for long and hopeless hours, having despaired of finding a way out, and having resigned

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themselves to eternal gloom, suddenly perceive a light in the distance and know that with a little more effort, with the exertion of a bit more energy, they will come at last to what the soul has longed for.

He gained his freedom, a suit of clothes and a five-dollar bill and hurried away from the prison with all his bitter passionate hatred coming into his eyes as soon as he was out of reach.

Matilda's joy that evening was boundless. Nothing she could possibly do for his comfort was left undone. She encouraged him and lamenting that conditions had made saving next to impossible, she told him that she had saved up a little money nevertheless, and that with his going to work and saving with her, they would soon have enough to get away with. Matilda wanted to go on a farm, and Anna was anxious to go with her. Carl was not over happy with the idea, but he felt that if he spent a few years that way and lived down his reputation, the police and the courts would forget about him, and he could then come back and, under an assumed name, live his own life without the ball and chain, without the bad record that was bound to get him into trouble again.

Matilda still occupied the little two-room flat and the curse of poverty was still visible upon it. The noise from the other flats and from the cars and wagons and children on the street was very annoying. He found it hard to speak. Anna came home with little delicacies for which she had gone off and Carl went at them ravenously, but for some incomprehensible reason they did not taste as good to him as he had expected they would.

Anna was as nice as she always was, but the sight of Anna made him very unhappy. She had aged a great deal in the two years. They talked of many

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things and as they talked his heart was hankering after George and Alice and the lights of Androon's café. There was a stuffiness, a closeness, about the little flat that was similar to the prison closeness and, coming as it did after he had got his freedom and expected more than that, it was very oppressive to him. He promised himself to go looking for George and Alice the following day, and resigned himself to staying that evening at home.

Matilda told him that she had seen Jimmie, that he was doing splendidly, that he was working as a printer and had worked himself up to a salary which seemed enormous to Carl and which he did not believe Jimmie earned. Carl hoped that he would never meet Jimmie again, and decided that should he come across him in the street he would try to pass on without speaking to him.

Next morning, long after Matilda and Anna had gone to the shop, he awoke on the little cot, that was too short for him, in the kitchen. He made his own breakfast and, after rapidly eating it, started off in search of George.

He came to the brown-stone dwelling on One Hundred and Tenth Street and was greeted by a very nervous and ill-tempered old lady who considered his query a misdemaenor meriting the punishment of at least a dozen years in the state's penitentiary—the old lady and most other old ladies and judges didn't know what it meant to spend a day in the state's penitentiary. Perhaps if it were a requirement for old ladies and judges, especially, to pass at least a year in prison before they were considered eligible to sit in judgment upon other human beings, we'd have shorter sentences, less confirmed criminals, and perhaps we might have no prisons at all.

He hurried away from there like a man that was

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lost. He felt cut off from all the world. It was as if the telegraph, the telephone, the railroad and all other wonderful inventions that have brought men far apart nearer to each other, were things not made for him. He was disinherited, disinherited by his race as well as by his father.

He walked on rapidly in the direction of the river. It was a mean, gloomy autumn day. It wanted to rain but couldn't. He stopped several times to think of what he ought to do. There was no use going home, he couldn't bear being there alone. He thought he ought to go to the shop, but he did want to find George and Alice before he went back to work. He wanted to find George just to tell him "to go to hell." He wanted to see Alice just to hear from her why she had made no attempt to see him, when after all, all these weeks and months of torture came upon him through the desire to protect her.

He walked on without looking where he was going. He was lost. He did not know what he really wanted. He was weary, despondent, discouraged and frightfully disappointed. The glorious sunshiny day that he had looked forward to, dreamt about these many weary weeks and months, this day of hope, this day of freedom, was a rainy, gloomy day. Life seemed to have lost its stability with that disappointment, it became a bad, fleeting, nebulous, nauseous dream. Everything seemed to press down upon his heart. He rushed on seeking expurgation, but knew of no sacred river the water of which could cleanse him.

One evening, soon after that, he was making his way down Broadway. Broadway had changed remarkably since he had seen it last and it occurred to him, with a sense of weight, how much it had changed since, as a boy, he and Jimmie used to steal into that street holding on to each other, afraid of everybody

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they encountered, yet finding the wonders there so compensating. There were greater crowds there now, and these hosts paraded up and down in the glaring lights of many new and wonderful electric signs. The light and gayety and movement had within them an indication of that vaguer something for which his soul craved, and he went with the stream, floating, as it were, north and south, floating like a piece of timber, broken from a great vessel heading across the sea in a storm.

He caught a glimpse of the face of a girl who had sidled up to a man looking into a brilliantly lighted window, and stopping to look in at the exhibition as he did, Carl saw her speak to him and then after a few minutes' conversation saw the two of them walk off arm in arm.

Maddened by what he had seen, he glided through the stream, like a rapid current, and came near enough to the couple to make sure that he had not been mistaken. He followed them. They turned in on Twelfth Street and went straight to Androon's cafe and hotel, and when they entered there, he selected a safe place from where he could watch and wait for her reappearance. It was yet rather early in the evening and he knew that she would soon be out again looking for more business.

Suddenly a horrible feeling of himself being watched came over him. The shadowy figure of a man flitted past him, went on a short distance, turned, and passed him again. Before he could turn a second time Carl disappeared.

He went home and there found Anna rocking herself, too gloomy to look up at him when she greeted him under her breath. Her wrinkling face, yellow and sickly looking, was pressing down upon her right hand,

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her left hand holding up the other elbow. She rocked herself gently.

Matilda looked extremely troubled but was made considerably lighter-hearted by Carl's appearance.

"I think that would be the best thing we could do," said Matilda, "if we could go out on a little farm. I'm sure we'd get along. You would be happier and Carl would be happier."

Carl had silently taken a seat at the table opposite Matilda and had fallen into an attitude, quite appropriate to his gloomy surroundings. He had heard these discussions over and over again during the few nights he had been home, and not only did he consider them to be futile, but he knew to what end they led and the thought of it made him uncomfortable.

Nor did Matilda's oft repeated solution make much of an impression on Anna.

"What's the use talking," she commented, "if we had the money we could do lots of things. When the next summer comes again, I don't care if I have to walk out there, I'm going out to the Catskills and am going to get a job in some boarding-house."

They were silent for a little while, then came the usual ending to their discussions. Carl knew it was coming and was on the verge of going out, but for some reason could not leave his seat.

"If we all got to work," said Matilda, watching him, "and tried to save, we could have enough by spring, this is only November, we could have enough to pay something down on a little farm and try it there."

"Haven't you been trying to save?" cried Carl impatiently. "Ever since I can remember you have been talking about saving, and you haven't saved a damn cent. What's the use of talking about working and saving, you know you have nothing to save even if

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you do work. I just won't go back to that shop, that's all there is to it. Go back to the damn shop and save up for appendicitis like Willie Bradd."

"Well, do you know of something better?" asked Matilda, timidly.

"I'll manage some other way. I'll show you yet. I won't hang around here for nothin' much longer. An' I'll pay for everything I've eaten, too, and with interest, too."

"See how unreasonable you are," said Matilda with tears in her eyes, "no one said a word to you about staying here for nothing. I'm not worrying about the miserable bit of food we're giving you, I am worrying myself sick because I don't know what to do for you, to make you happier. I want you to be a man. I want you to be happier than you are. What kind of a life do you call this? Are you happy this way?"

"No, I'm not, but I want a chance to breathe. I don't see why I should go back to that killing shop, and never get out of it, without trying something else first."

"Nobody is trying to stop you. If you can get a better job, I'll be as happy as you will be, not because we will expect it to help us any, but because it will make you happier."

"I'll get some money. I'll be damned if I don't. I have to see a fellow at ten o'clock to-night about a waitin' job. What time is it?"

It was already ten o'clock. Leaving the two women rather dubious about the waitin' job, he hurried out in pretended haste.

Out doors a sharp biting wind had arisen and tore through the slum streets, cutting through the threadbare clothes of an old lady who, bent almost double, was crawling for the shelter of her home.

Carl looked at her as she wobbled on a head of

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him. A queer thought came into his mind. He wandered whether she had a son who did nothing for her and saw in the picture of that aged woman the future of his mother. He was ashamed of himself and wished he might help her and promised himself, that when what he hoped for with all his being was realized, he would take care of her. What that hope was he did not know except that he depended upon all his cravings and his scheming to bring him out of the hole in which he felt himself to be.

Again he floated about in the streams on Broadway. It was somewhere near twelve, before he caught sight of her again. She was standing before another window and gazing in, and at sight of her he forgot his vow that he would never forgive her. He walked up to her, expressed his gladness to see her and she claimed to be glad to see him.

A great change had come over Alice, too, perhaps a greater change than had come over anything else in his old world. She was older, more careless. The warmth in her personality, the warmth he loved so much, was gone. She was cold and indifferent, and in her attempts to hide the rings around her eyes and the palor in her cheeks had made herself look almost hideous, but to Carl she was still Alice and he wanted a chance to talk to her, to pour out his heart.

"Got any money?" she asked.

"Yes, sure," said Carl somewhat hurt.

"Got two bucks? Two bucks'll take us up. We can talk awhile where it's warm."

Carl took her arm and signified his intention to spend the two bucks.

"Seen George?" he asked as they walked on to Androon's.

"George!" she said, with some surprise and a funny

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little laugh, "haven't seen the darn fool in more'n a year."

They walked on silently. She had few questions to ask, and he, wondering at her lack of enthusiasm, decided for the time being to be as indifferent as she was.

Upon opening the hotel door, a whiff of warm, bad air blew upon and delighted them. To Carl it was so much pleasanter than his own home, and he wished he could live at the hotel. He hoped Alice would renew her relations with him, even though her attitude towards him was ominous.

The dirty red carpet on the stairway was much less thick and soft than it had been two years ago, but it was inviting to him, and registering as Mr. and Mrs. Carlton, they went up-stairs.

They were given room number forty-two on the fourth floor. They passed the little room in which Carl had seen the drunken proprietor on the last and memorable evening he had been there. There was no card-table there, and in its stead was a desk. The huge safe was where he had seen it two years back. Mr. Androon, who had grown stouter since that time, and whose mustache had become considerably longer, dressed very richly, walked up and down the room smoking a huge cigar.

Alice hurried past his door as if she were afraid he'd notice them, but slackened her pace when they got to the floor above and stopped once to rest, as if she were not strong enough to go on.

They reached the top floor, and by the dim light that burned there, Carl saw a stairway going up further.

"Isn't this the top floor?" he asked.

"Yes," replied Alice, "them stairs go to the roof."

Room forty-two was the very room in which Carl

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had found Alice two years ago. Both laughed to think that they happened to get just that room, and proceeded to make themselves comfortable. No furniture had been added to the little place, and the old bird's nest was still stuck fast to the corner near the ceiling.

All the pent-up passion of two years began to boil and seethe within him, and like liquor, it went to his head. He trembled violently as he shut and locked the door, and as soon as he felt safe, he threw his arms about her, but she tactfully wrenched herself from his embrace. There had taken place a greater change within her than had been visible on her, and vaguely Carl attributed his loss of her to the powers that had tortured him for the two years. She was lifeless, worn out. Her soul was as threadbare as were some of the clothes she wore.

"I'm awfully tired," she said, taking advantage of his silly feeling towards her, "I'me lay down awhile."

He helped her lie down and seated himself on the edge of the bed, looking down at her painted, lifeless face and her closed eyes.

"You got somebody else," he said, getting weary of sitting there, "that's what's the matter."

"Couldn't help it, Collie. Had t'have somebody, y'know."

"Can't you let 'im go now? I'll take good care of you now. I know the game better."

"Naw, he'd kill me. He's got Mag an' me."

"Why the hell did George leave her?"

"Oh, he got sick o' her—like all you fellis."

"Don't y'know where he went to?"

"Haven't seen him in more'n a year."

Carl was silent. His emotions were boiling within him. He was desperate. The thought of the other fellow, who had so strong a hold on them, made his blood boil. Something had to be done. He had

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aroused a feeling of dislike towards her when she first discouraged his attention, but now that he understood that her attitude towards him was due to this other fellow, he loved her passionately again and wanted to fight for her.

"I'll get hold of George," he cried, "and make him come back. How about it, Al'?"

"Naw, you foolish Collie, she don't want him no more."

"Why?"

"That feller would kill us anyhow."

"Can't you go away? Y'don't have to live in this old hole always, do you?"

"No, but y'need lots of money to run away far enough, he'd foller us up, that feller."

"I'll get the money. Will y'come with me?"

"No, I can't."

"Why?"

"I have to stay right here for the rest of my life, I guess."

"But why?"

"Aw, you'll get sick o' me, Collie, what's the use bein' so foolish. Now you know that."

"Y're tellin' me a lie," he cried. "Y'like the other fellow too damn much. Y'don't give a damn about me, that's why."

"Sure I do like you, Collie, what's the matter with you?" she said with a grin, "go down-stairs and get us a couple of beers and cigarettes an' let's have a good time. What's the use of chewin' the rag?"

Carl hurried down, getting another glimpse into the quarters of the fabulously rich Mr. Androon. The sight of a waiter reminded him of the lie he had told his mother and he thought of her sitting in the little kitchen, bemoaning her fate. The thought that he was deceiving her was not a pleasant one, but the

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hunger in his soul was undeniable. He was a drowning man, and was but catching for a straw. He couldn't help it. His life, his existence demanded it of him, what could he do? That which his mother asked of him, he could not do. He would rather by far, die than tie himself up to that shop again. There was what his soul was craving, here was life without which was death, and he was yet too young, he had had too little in his life, to be willing to die already.

He stood before the bar in the bar-room to be waited upon. The safe in Androon's private room had left a black, torturing impression—it held all that he needed—and he kept seeing the huge, heavy door swing open and shut, continuously. He wished he could steal in there invisibly and get enough money to carry out the plans that must be carried out and that yet were well-nigh unattainable. He thought of himself running off towards the railroad station with Alice at his side, and saw himself happy, writing a letter to his mother, and enclosing enough to dispel all her worries.

Swearing with impatience, after he had run through his plans a dozen times or more, he finally attracted the attention of one of the bartenders.

"Sorry t'keep you waitin'," the bartender said with fictitious courtesy, "what'll y'have?"

Carl was very much pacified by that courtesy and smiling with gratitude, he ordered four bottles of beer and two boxes of cigarettes.

Again he saw the safe on his way up and again he saw himself going in there invisibly and all that should follow, and as he thought, he went so fast he reached the fourth floor breathlessly

Alice was gone!

He stood still a moment trembling with rage. He swore at her, and threw the bottles with great force

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upon the bed. Not a sign of her was left. She had dressed hurriedly and escaped. He was so confused and miserable he could have cried like a baby.

In anger he opened a bottle. It was long since he had had a drink, he was going to enjoy that at least. But the fear that it might get him drunk, and into trouble again, stopped him from drinking it. An impulse of revenge seized him. He pulled up some of the bed clothes, and poured the open bottle upon the sheets. He opened the other three and poured them all out, then throwing back the spread and putting out the light, he went down.

During the first few moments out doors he was determined to seek her and fight it out with her, but it occurred to him that after this incident she wouldn't be fool enough to remain on the street unless she had gone for the protection of the "other fellow" and afraid of "that other fellow" who knew the police so well, he turned towards home, with murderous hope of revenge boiling in his heart and brain.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Carl woke next morning at the same time that Matilda and Anna did, and dressing, he started out of the house without having had his coffee. Matilda stopped him.

"Why don't you have some coffee?" she demanded.

"Oh, I don't care for any."

"You can't be going about all day without anything to eat."

He was glad she had called him back. He was ashamed to eat there, knowing that he contributed nothing, but he was hungry, and the smell of coffee was most enticing.

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He drank his coffee and ate his bread and butter without saying a word, then left the house.

All morning and part of the afternoon he went from restaurant to restaurant, from hotel to hotel only to find something about each of them to frighten him away. He was afraid of this man and afraid of that man. Everybody knew an exconvict when he saw one, besides, he was sure that they kept records of all the "ex-cons" that were loose, so they didn't need to employ any by mistake. By three o'clock in the afternoon he decided to tell his mother that if she spoke to Mr. Donald and Mr. Donald wanted him, he'd be ready to go to work. He had dreaded the idea of going back there, but now that he came to the conclusion that that was best, he felt better, and as the afternoon wore on, he began to be anxious about it. Yes, he'd rather settle down, like Jimmie, and get to earning a big salary. This floating around was no good. He was very glad for his own as well as for his mother's sake that he had come to that decision and hoped that nothing would interfere with his being employed.

Now that he expected soon to be at work, he wanted to take a trip around his old time haunts. He stuck his hand into his pocket and felt about among his coins. He was hungry. Since he was going to go to work he felt he ought to have a little pleasure and so started for the nearest restaurant, where he hoped to get a real good meal.

He was disappointed with the food brought to him. It was not at all like what he had dreamed it would be, when he lay dreaming about these things in his cell, and he wondered whether he'd be disappointed if he could afford to go into the "swellest" place and get a meal there.

With the feeling of disappointment predominating all his other feelings, he wandered about the rest of the

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afternoon, rushing headlong towards some goal singled out by his retrospective mood, only to hurry away from there as soon as he arrived.

It grew dark. The short November day had worn out rapidly and as night came along and lit up the western sky with a wind-blown fire, there settled upon him a great sadness, driving him from street to street, aimlessly.

He came upon a rather busy street and right into a stream of workers on their way home from the different shops and other places of business. He was lost in thought, and seemed not to see any one of the hundreds that were passing him, when suddenly one ink-stained face against a well-lit store window arrested his attention. He stopped to look, and the fellow stopped to look back at him. Driving a few of the hurrying workers out of their way, they met.

Jimmie had grown big. He was a printer and black with his ink. They laughed, recalled incidents, inquired into each other's well-fare and were pained by the change that had come over them. It seemed to Carl that the Jimmie he spoke to was but a memory of the Jimmie he knew.

"Do you ever see Min?" he questioned, struggling to subdue his emotions and worried by the burning feeling in his eyes.

"Well, I guess I do," said Jimmie, smiling significantly and keeping the smile up till Carl knew what he meant.

"When are you goin' to get married?" Carl asked, smiling himself.

"We're married since June."

"What y'doin' for a living?" he asked bracing up.

"Can't you see?"

"Printer?"

"Yah."

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"Like it?"

"Have to."

"Gettin' anything out of it?"

"Damn little. But can't kick. Lots others worse off than I."

"That's right, too," said Carl, pretending to be in a hurry.

Expressing themselves to the effect that they hoped to meet again they went their own ways.

It was seven o'clock when Carl reached the tenement in which his mother lived and he went up the three flights of stairs expecting to find them already at supper, and was sorry that he hadn't started for home earlier. There was an awful weight of sadness in his heart. He longed for Minnie—just to look at her.

When he reached his mother's door, there seemed to be something in the air, and he opened the door with expectation. To his unbounded delight, he saw George in his place at the table, much more at home there than he was himself. At sight of him, George jumped from his chair and ran towards him. They embraced and rocked each other in an attempt to express their emotion.

Matilda got up from her seat immediately and in spite of Carl's protesting cleaned her place up for him, showing in every little act that she was glad to do it. There was something about the personality of George that made Matilda glad that he liked her boy. She recognized the great influence he had upon Carl and was very anxious to please him and to help both of them; while Carl, on the other hand, thought more of his mother for every little act of kindness or consideration that she showed towards George.

"Well, how the devil are you, Collie?" asked George

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again when they were seated near each other. "Rotten dump, wasn't it?"

"Rotten! Gee!" cried Carl, shaking his head and beaming with the delight and importance of one who having survived an awe-inspiring experience, was the hero of the occasion.

"Like the Island, I suppose?"

"Well, when you get over the dirtier cells and get used to 'em, its the same thing."

"The 'cooler' is worse though, isn't it?"

"That's rotten!" cried Carl his face screwing up, his eyes shooting fire, "nuff to set you crazy, thinkin' of it. Damn them, they give it t'you for nothing at all. No reason. You just didn't do something as some dirty, rotten screw wanted you to. Y'haven't even answered him, and before you know it, y're goin' down. Many fellows go bug-house down there, and many of them kill themselves. Oh, what a rotten hole."

"Did you go down there many times?"

"Five or six times. Y'can't keep out y'know. There's nothing square about that hole. Try all you like to obey rules and keep out, some damn screw'll come along, ask you t'do somethin' dirty f'r 'im and maybe y'just can't, well, it won't make no difference, down y'go. No matter how big a rotten liar that screw may be, his word goes every time against yours."

He went on to tell of all the suffering he had had to do and Matilda stood and stared at him. Oh, how her heart ached to think of all that he had had to endure and how ready she was to forgive him everything he had ever done. She felt guilty. She felt that she had brought all that upon him. He had told her something about what he had endured, but now he was telling so much more. Was George more sympathetic than she? Hadn't she sympathized with him? She thought of the fact that she had tried to discourage his

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telling of what he had suffered and regretted having done so.

"When I went down the 'jail' the first time," Carl went on, "Oh, it was awful. If there is such a thing as hell, and if the Lord knows his business, there'll be a special place there for screws, there ought to be. I'd just like to get these little fingers on the keeper's neck just f'r five minutes, to pay'm back a little bit for what he done to me that night."

"Try to forget about them, Carl," said Matilda, alarmed at the excitement with which he spoke.

"Forget about them?" he cried, "I'll forget about them when I see them roastin' in that special place in hell, and I'll be glad t' go there myself just to see them there. The damn dirty cowards! They walk all over you, just because you're down. I'd just like to get a couple of screws alone. I ain't much strong, but I tell you, I'm just mad enough to tear their rotten eyes right out, and it wouldn't hurt me a bit what they'd be doin' to me."

Matilda tried to get him off the subject, but she was unsuccessful.

After answering her, Carl went on again, "Wait till I tell you what happened the first night."

He went into every detail, describing every little sound and its effect upon him, till Matilda and Anna were in tears, and George with burning eyes desired vengeance, as much as he did.

"Then as it was gettin' morning," he went on, "we only felt it gettin' morning, it's so dark there the light never gets in, but as I felt it was gettin' morning, there was a yell, or howl, or growl-like that went through the whole prison, that I thought I sure was goin' bug-house. By golly, if I didn't yell, m'self. Oo, it was terrible! It was awful! Sounded as if they were all tearing their insides out. Oo, I tell you it was some-

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thing awful! Makes me sick to think of it now Sounded like a lot of wild animals—I tell you I never want to hear such yellin' again."

"They were killing somebody, hey?" said George knowingly.

"Yah," said Carl, surprised at his knowledge, "on the chair."

It seemed to Matilda that she could hear the yelling. It horrified her. It made her sick. She expressed herself to that effect and ran out into the other room.

Anna pleaded with Carl not to talk any more about it, and when he stopped, Matilda came back, her face red and her eyes wet. Carl thought it funny that they should feel more terrible than he, who had suffered all that, and he laughed at them.

Matilda took every opportunity offered her to furtively study his face. He was a different being then. He had suffered so much and she could read every line of his agony on his forehead and in his eyes and her heart went out to him. All evening long she cried, laughing when they referred to her crying, and wiping her face. She watched him constantly, and longed passionately for the opportunity to put her arms about him, and ask for his forgiveness. When Carl was a baby his father often told Matilda that everything the boy would have to suffer, she would be responsible for, as he never wanted to bring him into the world, and Matilda now suffered the burden of that responsibility.

After supper, George insisted on helping with the dishes, and because of him, Carl wanted to help too. Then George dismissed the two women, saying that since they had not done their share of earning the supper, they ought to work after it to pay for it, and rolling his sleeves up, he began to wash the dishes and ordered Carl to get a towel.

Carl envied George for his ability to enliven every-

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body, for his admirable disposition, and both Anna and Matilda thought him a splendid fellow, and when through with the dishes, Matilda asked him to stay over night. He gladly accepted the invitation.

They stayed up a long time, telling stories and recalling incidents, describing the most thrilling adventures, and Carl once more giving the minutest details of some of his horrible experiences at the prison, Matilda again frequently wiping her eyes and trying at the same time to smile.

A hoarse-throated phonograph in one of the flats in the tenement opposite them began to play a popular waltz and George instantly got on his feet. He grabbed the protesting Carl, and began to waltz with him, but Carl soon got away. Then George took hold of Anna and forced her about the room. She laughed and protested, claiming to have grown clumsy, to have forgotten how to waltz, but her protest was useless. She was obliged to dance with him till the screaky thing stopped playing, then she fell into the rocker, laughing, sighing, tired but happier than she had been in a long time. The little bit of gayety awakened the desire to live and to be happy within her and she went to bed that night with some thing to think about.

Matilda placed some bedding on the floor of the kitchen near the two windows and Carl and George went to bed upon it as soon as the two were in the other room with the door closed behind them.

A thousand and one questions and answers were exchanged in the next hour. A thousand and one recollections were brought from their graves. Then George became very sleepy and his answers grew slow and heavy, but Carl had yet much to ask about and to tell and he tried hard to keep his beloved friend awake.

"Listen, don't go to sleep yet," he pleaded, "what made you give up Mag?"

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"Oh, just got sick of her. You didn't think I was going to hang on to her all m'life, did you?"

"Why not?"

"Oh, hell! That kind of a woman? She don't give a darn about me anyway. That's her kind, see? They get another fellow every month, every year, if you're good to 'em. He'll live with her awhile and then she'll get some one else."

Carl told of his experience with Alice, and George pointed out vehemently that it only proved that what he said was correct, "That's what they all do."

But his friend's version of the whole affair did not satisfy Carl. There had been a sadness about Alice's face that upset that theory in his mind. But he did not express his ideas for he feared the ridicule with which his friend might regard any such show of sentiment.

"What do your folks have to say?" he asked a few minutes later.

George was almost asleep, but he opened his eyes again and at the repetition of the question, answered, "I saw my dad shortly after you were nabbed. Everything is all right now. I changed m'name, see! Get me? It isn't George Brown any more to dirty up his family name, it's George W. Jones that's a loafer, good f'r nothin' now. That's all they cared about."

"That's a cinch."

"You couldn't beat it."

"How the devil can we get some dough?" asked Carl suddenly changing the subject.

"Gee, that's a question I'd rather answer in the day time."

"How are you getting along?" Carl insisted, "What do you do?"

His reply came like a growl and Carl was obliged to repeat his question.

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"Me?" he cried waking, "I—"

"Not so loud. You'll wake 'em up."

"Me?" began George again more softly, "I got another lassie. It's the only job a fellow can do and be a gentleman. They want you, they need you in the business."

"Listen, George. Don't go off snorin'. Listen to this an' I'll let y'go."

"Go head."

"The fellows up the river tell me that when a fellow goes there once he is never safe again. There are many fellows there that they took back again and they didn't do a damn thing. They have some that have gone back four and five times for doin' nothin.' A lot of the screws work with the detectives and they make money on the fellows that way. You listening?"

"I'm listening. Go ahead."

"Well, I have to get away from here. I wouldn't stand for another dose of it. I'd sooner cut my throat. The other night when I saw Alice two of the damn detectives were follerin' me."

"Well?"

"Why can't we go off to Chicago, or some place like that?"

"I don't mind the change. I don't give a hang where I go."

"See," said Carl, happy that his friend was willing to go with him, "later a few years we can come back. Don't you think it's a good idea?"

"Yah!"

"We can get along there as well as here, and may be better."

"Say, for the love of Mike, Collie, y'goin' t'keep this up all night? Go to sleep. We have all day tomorrow and all month for that matter, to talk it over in. I don't give a darn if I never leave this bed, now."

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Carl made no reply and while he lay sleeplessly for several hours thinking of what they might do and how they might do it, his companion slept soundly.

CHAPTER XXIV.

George was sure that he could get a "lassie" for Carl to protect and Carl being very anxious to get a job, kept urging George on to search for him. They had decided that that kind of a job was the only kind of a one that would make it possible for them to gather enough money to get away with. George paid Matilda money enough to cover a week's food for both of them and every day during that week they went out to search for "jobs," and every evening they returned home, unsuccessful, but not discouraged. During the entire week that they searched for a "lassie" for Carl, George had not gone near the poor creature he was supposed to protect, but after that, having got considerable rest from his heavy duties, he went to see her Saturday afternoon.

Carl was to meet him at a certain corner at five o'clock, and was there some time waiting for him. George was late in coming and when he came, Carl could see by the expression on his face that there was some disappointment in store for him.

"Gee," cried George with a sickly smile, "she gave me the bounce."

They started off on a side street and George, who was considerably disheartened, began again, "I'm really gettin' sick of this life, m'self."

"Let's get away from here," said Carl, "I hate this damn hole."

"Oh, y'need money," said George impatiently, "I ain't goin' the way we went from the Island."

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Carl began to offer plans, but no sooner did he offer one than his friend found some reason for throwing it out of consideration.

Evening came down as they planned, the lights were lit, and the crowds of workers increased. They came upon the street and the block where Carl had met Jimmie a few nights before, and he was possessed by the fear that he might meet him again. The turn of affairs was anything but encouraging and Carl wanted to avoid meeting him again, but hardly had he given George his reason for desiring to turn off that street, when he caught sight of Jimmie's face, in the crowd. Jimmie was not alone this time, and in spite of himself, Carl's curiosity was irrepressible. The face of the some one with Jimmie was the face of little Minnie, grown older. Carl's heart began to beat violently and his cheeks turned red. An unutterable weight of sadness came down upon him. He managed to get George to understand that he wanted him to follow without inquiring for reasons till he could himself make the necessary explanations, and George followed him with half-hearted interest. Jimmie and his sweetheart passed them without recognizing Carl, and he immediately turned about and followed them, with George after him.

When they turned off on a side street, the two boys turned off there, too, and as the crowds grew less dense, Carl increased the distance between them. They came upon the little park near poor Mrs. Valey's candy-store and disheartened, Carl ceased following them and began to explain matters to George.

George saw that the meeting had had a strong effect upon his companion and sought to relieve Carl's wretchedness by ridiculing the whole matter, but he only aggravated him more than ever and so decided to say no more about it to him.

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He was most miserable, no matter how he tried to console himself. The face of Minnie was haunting him, and he thought himself the most unhappy creature that ever was born. Jimmie had done better than he had done. Jimmie had been willing to work hard for little or nothing, now Jimmie was successful and extremely happy. It seemed to him then that all that he had longed for all his life, Jimmie now had. If he had kept on working or going to school he would have been much more in her favor than Jimmie would have been, because she had always liked him better. He had been lazy, he was a failure, and he cursed himself and his lot.

George spoke to him, but he answered with a word here and there, and generally, disinterestedly.

He felt for a moment that he ought to do away with himself, that there was nothing but misery and unhappiness before him. The face of Minnie illumined, like an unreachable star in the night sky of his youth, shone and radiated and tortured him. He struggled with it. He tried to find fault with her, to censure her for having mistreated him, for having been ready to like anybody that was willing to shower things upon her; but deep down in his heart he told himself that this wasn't true and was ashamed of his meanness.

With feverish haste he began to hammer out plans again, but none of them seemed to please his friend.

"You make me sick, George, honest you do," he cried impatiently, "you're gettin' really dopy sittin' around and doin' nothin'."

"What do you want me to do? Worry m'self sick, as you do?"

"Well, y'cant be doin' what you're always doin' either, I want you to get that 'noodle' of yours to work and help think up somethin' to do. We got to

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do something. I'm not going to play around and then run up against that dump up the river again. I'd rather kick the damn bucket over all together. Y'don't know what a rotten hell it is, that's what's the matter with you."

"Well, what do you want to do?"

"Anything. We got to get some dough and get out."

"Well, go ahead. What'll you do?"

"Oh, hell!" cried Carl impatiently, "cut out that line of talk, will you. Use your head. What's the use askin' me what I'll do?"

"You won't catch me going to work in some rotten hole of a shop. Just put that in your pipe. I tried it last year for a week. It was the damdest week I ever spent. Work ten hours a day. I don't give a hang what the place up the river is, I tell you I'd just as soon go there as go to work in a shop. Work ten hours a day and when you get through you feel as though you've been in a faint or something—you haven't been alive at all. And then, after working like a horse, what have you got. Tells me I didn't earn much the first week learning and gives me five dollars, and thinks he's giving me a present. 'What the hell am I learning for,' I asked him. I didn't go there learning the damn work for my own pleasure? 'I learned to help you,' I said. I took the five all right and then I turned right around and after looking at him a minute, I said, 'Here, take your damned job and go plump to hell with it.' You saw that friend of yours with the pretty little girl. A nice looking guy, that. Let him work if he wants to. I'm going to keep these little hands nice an' soft like all respectable people. You don't catch any of them respectable gentlemen workin', do you? They say, 'Let the dopes work,' I say so too."

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"But what are we goin' to do if we ain't goin' to work? How long do you think you can get your Maggie and your Florry to work for you? You've been tryin' all week to get new ones, haven't you? Besides I tell you the truth, I don't give a damn about them poor kids workin' f'r me. I just don't care about it, that's all."

"Hell! You do them good. They want you. You protect them. Where would they land without some man protecting them?"

"I don't give a damn. I don't like it much. I know there's lots of fellows livin' that way, but I don't care for it. Besides, you can't go on forever that way."

"I don't expect to live forever."

"I know, but y'can't go on like this even as long as you expect to live."

"Well, what's the use arguing, if you got such a big head, what do you think we ought to do?"

"We got to get some money."

"I know all that," said George impatiently, "we've been hearing it all week. Where? That's what I want to know."

They came upon the tenement in which Matilda struggled to keep her little home agoing and went up silently.

Anna had had some trouble at the shop and was rocking herself on the rocker in a depressing mood. She seemed to feel a little better at their appearance, as if the silence had borne down upon her, and George immediately proceeded to make the little flat lively. He began to play about with Anna and she scolded him for it.

"You'd think I was a pretty young girl," she said looking at him with half a frown and half a smile, "the way you act."

"You are a pretty young girl," he answered with

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little conviction in his manner of saying it, "you aren't old."

"How old do you think I am?"

"Oh, about seventeen or nineteen, something like that."

"Aw go on," said Anna, "you're making fun of me."

Matilda had been suffering from a severe headache for two days and the expression on her face, when she asked him whether they wanted anything to eat, was not a happy one. Now that his income had been so suddenly stopped, George did not want to break his last "five spot" and they had come home early in the hope of getting their supper. But seeing Matilda and the expression on her face when she asked them about something to eat, both boys said they wanted nothing.

There was an awful feeling of depression about the place and George wished he hadn't come up, while Carl debated with himself whether he oughtn't to take his hat and coat and leave at once.

Matilda, without the slightest bit of formality, took herself off to bed and Anna, after a little while, claiming to be very tired, excused herself and followed her, in spite of their arguing that next day was Sunday and that she could sleep late if she wanted to.

The two boys sat down near each other at the stove, and began to discuss matters. Matilda was sick with their idleness, Anna didn't care to spend any time with them, because she was sick of helping to support them. Something had to be done and so they came upon a scheme and began to work it out in detail. It was the best scheme! It was the only possible, workable scheme!

Again they considered it and reconsidered it. Again they went through all the details and then began to make preparations. George claimed the need

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of a little sleep, and sticking his shoes into the warm oven he threw his head back and went off to doze.

A death-like stillness was over the little flat. Carl couldn't sleep and didn't know how George could do such a thing at such a time. He paced the floor on his toes. In the next room he could hear his mother and Anna breathing heavily and from without came faint, distant slum voices and the solitary foot-falls on the cold sidewalks below. Lights from neighboring tenements made their way through the cold window-panes, and looking out, Carl could see where they came from. In the glare of their variant sources, Carl could see some women finishing up their day's work, sewing, and others just sitting. In one room, he saw a fellow seated at a table apparently studying.

Again he took to pacing the floor. He thought very hard and struggled to keep himself from weakening. He assured himself that it would all work out just as they planned it would. At any rate it was the best thing, the only thing they could do.

He kept bringing back into his mind the face of Minnie, for every time he saw that face he was much more determined to carry out his plan. The dreadful uncertainty continually hanging over him, the vivid recollection of all the discomforts he had had to endure, his disappointments, his hatreds, and the desire to make his way because of those he hated, spurred him on and he wished midnight might hurry and come. Some moments the thought of patiently working himself into independence came and tormented him, but he always dismissed that thought with recollections of the agony of getting up much before dawn in the lone winter nights. The feeling of weariness, the abuse of foremen driving him on to work without allowing him the privilege to reply, the cold darkness of the long pleasureless winter, the endless toiling, the insig-

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nificant wages, and Jimmie's prosperity drove him to the point on the road to ruin where turning is impossible.

The hour sped by as he thought, and as he thought George slept. He had decided to let him sleep until it was time to start off. Carl began to tremble violently as the time drew near, but he told himself that he trembled because it was cold At no time did he allow himself to think of abandoning the plan. It was the only thing they could do, he was ever more sure of that. When the hour of midnight pulled along, he became nervous, but he only wished that it was all over, that he was a day, a week, a month older.

They were to leave at one o'clock and as the time for waking his companion approached, he heard the clank of keys and prison bars and long-striped shadows flashed across his sickening vision.

"But might as well risk it," he cried within himself, "without money they'll get me back there anyway. No, no, no. I wouldn't go back to the damned shop for anything. Just as soon kill myself. Get up in the middle of the night, work till you're black in the face and get five dollars a week."

"Come, George," he whispered into George's deaf ears, shaking him, "it's one o'clock."

"Oh, let it go to some other time," groaned the sleepy George, "I don't want to go now."

"If you don't come now, I'll never have anything to do with you. That's a hell of a way of going at it, the last moment. I told you that's what will happen if you fall asleep."

"I can't help it."

"Yes, you can. You're afraid, that's what's the matter."

"I am not."

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"Come, then wash your face with cold water. Come, let's be done with it."

Carl hurried up to the faucet and grabbing a hanging towel soaked it in cold water and before the sleepy George knew what was going to happen to him, slapped it upon his face.

George was beside himself with anger. But the shock woke him up and after railing at him for doing such a mean trick, he was ready to go.

"It's just the right time now," whispered Carl, handing his companion his hat and coat, "He won't be there after two, I don't think."

"Don't forget—" began George and Carl interrupted him.

"No, I'll get it now."

Procuring a chair, he noiselessly placed it against the dish closet, stretched his hand way up and began feeling about there above his head, whispering as he did so, "I saw it here about two weeks ago."

But he couldn't find it and began to worry. He spied a small wooden box and nervously pulled at it. In that box were all the playthings he had ever had. There was his worn-out picture-book. A host of thoughts were awakened by it, but he shoved it aside and rummaged through the box till he discovered his toy pistol and pulling it out, replaced everything as he had found it.

"He'll see that thing's a fake," whispered George.

"No, he won't. He'll be so drunk, he won't see anything."

They turned out the gas and opened the door.

"I ought to lock this," said Carl.

They stood thinking a moment then George suggested, "Lock it and throw the key through the transom."

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"Good idea," said Carl. "We won't want to come back here."

On Broadway they met two girls who were anxious to earn another "bill" before the day of rest brought its light upon the earth and with them made their way into Androon's hotel.

Androon was still up and busily unpacking a new box of whiskey which he had received but a few hours previous.

The time to strike the blow had arrived. To the surprise of the two young ladies, they dismissed them in great haste, and then, assured of being alone, stole down again to the first floor.

The halls were silent. Conditions could not possibly have been more favorable, and George was glad he had been forced to go then, even though his heart did beat violently. They entered the little room with a rush, and while Carl stopped to turn the key in the door, George pointed his pistol at the half-drunk man and in a horrible, shaky voice, threatened him with death if he uttered a sound.

Carl rushed over to the other side, and ordered Androon to throw back his hands.

Flashing fire, Androon's moist red eyes took in the whole situation. With a tremendous effort he wheeled about his massive body, and so rapidly that it took the breath away from the amateur gunman, he struck George upon the hand and sent the pistol flying across the room. Then in the same moment, the slime dripping from his red, wrinkled lips, he pulled out a drawer, while the two boys fell upon him like savage beasts. With his bent back warding off their blows, his fat hand searched feverishly for the cold iron he knew was there.

It was a matter of moments before the decisive act would be done, and, confused as they were, they all

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knew it, and all struggled ferociously, madly toward that end. In this brutish struggle setting aflame instincts dormant for centuries, Carl's foot kicked the hatchet with which but a few moments before Androon had leisurely opened his new box of "Rye"; and in that touch and the resultant sound Carl sensed the thing that would keep him above the waters in which he was sinking. The hammer end of the hatchet struck Androon on the head and the fat fingers of the fat hand ceased searching in the drawer.

At sight of Androon falling in a heap to the floor, George turned the key in the door lock and ran for his life. Realizing in a vague way what he had done, Carl was unable to move for a moment. The door shut itself. He was alone. George was gone. The frightful heap on the floor was writhing. The blood trickling down the dreadful face brought a frightful recollection. For an instant, he saw the half chopped skull of a chicken. The chicken he had once tried to kill. The whole world was red. His feet trembled. Hardly knowing what he was doing, he lifted the hatchet as he had lifted the cleaver, and came down with it upon his victim's head. The victim stretched out. The chicken ceased flopping. Carl felt sick. Fear rode in on dispelling clouds and he rushed for the door, rushed back and turned off the light. Again at the door, he collected himself, hurried out, locked the door, looked about, saw no one was there, threw the key back through the transom and started up the stairs instead of going down.

"Damn fool," he cried within himself as he took two steps at a time. "What have I done! Now, it's all up!"

On the top floor, before the room where he had seen Alice last, he stopped a moment to think of what

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he was doing. "Crazy idiot," he said to himeslf, "what am I running up for?"

It occurred to him that the stairway before him went up to the roof and that he might escape by running along the roofs of the several buildings that were of the same height.

The night was very cold but clear and the sky as starry as the sky can be over the glaring lights of New York. He stood trembling a moment, then started from roof to roof on tip-toe. Running headlong through blackened tunnels, where phantoms breathed sadly and treacherously, he gained at last the street; and himself a phantom hardly daring to breathe, he wound about, crossing and criss-crossing, till he came to the river side.

Hope flashed across his mind. Great steamers and schooners were docked there. He would stow away.

He came to a big five-mast schooner, and heard a group of men talking in a foreign language. He slunk down between a huge box and a wall and waited for his chance. Deciding that some one might come for the box, take him and expose him, he started off again.

He came to another schooner. Men were busy on it, but no one was in sight, on the dock or near it. He stood contemplating it a moment. Suddenly hearing a gruff voice behind him, he dropped instantly on the other side of a huge steading near the drive-way.

The gruff-voiced individual was talking gruffly to another individual that had nothing to say, then started back for the schooner and suddenly discovered the prostrate form between the steading and another wall. Stopping to look down at it, he swore angrily and recalled the man he had sent off.

"Come back here, Bell'r," he cried, then turning towards the schooner called for some one else, "Stone, get over here."

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"Take this drunken sot," he said when the two men arrived, "and dump him off on the sack pile."

Bell'r, the mate, who had gone off to look for the missing man, thought when recalled that the captain had discovered the body of the man he was to look for, but in bending down he saw that it was not Mike.

"That ain't Mike, Cap'n," he said humbly.

"Hold y'r damn tongue," cried the Captain. "I don't care who it is. We should have pulled off an hour ago; here we are hangin' around because of a drunken son-of-a-gun."

The two men grabbed the limp form and began carrying it to the heap of sacks.

The captain followed them mumbling as he walked, "This drunk might just as well be earnin' an hones' livin'. We'll make a damn good sailor of him. The bill of health's got it we have twenty-one men aboard. We can't sail without him. It'll do him good, the damned sot."

The boat somewhat secluded and a short distance away from it, there was a great bustle of half-naked men and machines, loading big schooners and little schooners. Carl did his best to act like a drunken man. He was hopeful and yet saw little hope. They had dropped him on a heap of the most awful-smelling gunny-sacks, where for a long time and much according to his desire, he was left alone. The smell of the gunny-sacks was dreadful, but the fear of the night, the fear of the creatures that filled the night was infinitely worse. Using his arms for a pillow, he shoved his nose into the inside corner of an elbow and pressed his bursting forehead against the other arm. His mind was boiling and seething with fear and regret and concern about George, but most of all by the great wish that the boat would move off.

How his sick imagination worked! At one mo-

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ment he heard, he was sure he heard and saw George standing on the dock with outstretched hands and calling to him, "What have you done!" He saw and heard a thousand other pictures and sounds and the pictures and sounds were sapping his life strength from him. He feared he was going crazy. He dug his nose further into the muscles of his arm and tried to stop the awful trembling that had seized upon him. This was another tug of war, the most dreadful in all his life. He pulled and pulled and pulled with all his mind and knew that something was about to snap.

Oh, if the boat only moved. If he could get away. He felt the steady nearing of the detectives and police like the approach of a storm. The enemy was approaching, would the horribly slow thing never move off? Every sound on that dirty wooden dock was that of pursuing feet. Every step was hurried and anxious and seemed to be coming his way. The night was filled with monstrous ghosts. They were swimming about in the air, like great, ugly, black bats. They had long bony fingers and razor-like claws. The claws would dig into him, and he squirmed feeling them, as if they were already parting his flesh and creeping in towards his heart and brain.

Of the endless number of footsteps that began coming and going on the dock, while the cursed schooner waited and waited, as if for his doom, some footsteps passed and others came towards him. He shook till the deck began to toss and he began to sink.

"So Red Mike's gone," said one of the two men that had come near him and began loosing some ropes.

"Yes, an' I got the devil for it," replied the other.

"Wher'd y'get this poor devil?"

"Found him sleeping it off on the dock."

"Wait till he wakes up, hey? I think that's a damn shame. That's agin the law, too. That's kidnappin'.

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Fellow off on a little spree an' wakes up to find himself mid-ocean. That ain't right. Wakes up mid-ocean and finds hisself goin' hell knows where, to some dirty rotten hole on a twenty-day trip."

A sudden yell from below silenced the men and sent them hustling and jumping and dancing about like mad. The boat moved off.

Carl had steadily been losing hold of his consciousness. A vast indefinite feeling had come upon him as he struggled to get what the two men were saying. He had just heard something about mid-ocean, a bit of encouragement permitted him to let loose on the hold. Whatever the reasons may have been, he was sinking, sinking, sinking, as the tugboat pulled at the schooner, and when the schooner was out upon the river and then entered the bay, he floated off unconsciously in the great abyss between life and death.

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WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN!

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PART III.

WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN!

CHAPTER I.

He was being borne by the salt waves from one end of the abyss to the other at a rate as fast as that of traveling worlds, and yet was but suspended in the undiscoverable center of it, tossing helplessly, sick and growing more sick, weary without wish or desire. Had he been lying there very long? Was it a year? Or was it but a few moments and the thing hadn't moved off yet? But yes, she had moved off, she must have moved off. He wasn't on the bad-smelling heap of sacks any more. What had happened to him? Had he been taken? Was he in his bunk in the jail up the river? Was it all up? Were they going to kill him? By the way, something had awakened him. It had surely been something or some one, and it had dug into him. A horrible monstrous ghost with long bony fingers. He was in jail on a bunk. He was lost. It was all over with him. But whatever it was, it was still digging into him. He opened his eyes and saw some one beside his bunk.

"What the hell d'y'want?" growled Carl, sick, miserable, every cell of his body in discomfort.

"Oh! y'are alive, are y'u?" said the captain of the schooner. "What the hell's the matter with y'u? Are y'u dyin'? I thought y'u was only drunk. Here, damn y'u, wake up."

He prodded him again with his stick, till Carl once more let himself be heard.

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"Damn you, what do you want?" he cried and the tears came easily as they used to come when he was a little baby and would often awaken suddenly, frightened and sick.

"You'll be feedin' the fish, y'u fool, if y'u keep on layin' there much longer. You've been off your nut since we left. Get down and walk around a bit or you'll die on the bunk."

The Captain decided to leave him alone, and left the room where were a dozen bunks, six over six.

Carl had thought he was alone, but with the departure of the Captain many other voices arose. The small room was smelling horribly as the gunny-sacks had smelled and worse. The air was loaded with smoke, the stench of unclean pipes, and ugly voices coming between the teeth that gripped the dirty stems. He wanted to raise his head and look about him, but he felt himself strapped. The feeling of being strapped drove his heart into convulsions and sent the blood to his head. Was he entrapped? Were they keeping him for the authorities? The thing was rocking so violently, and he was dreadfully sick at his stomach. "Fool!" he admonished himself, in a lull in his fear, "they strapped me to keep me from falling out." He moved his hand down to where the straps were, and feeling about them found that he could easily unstrap himself.

The voices quibbled, quarrelled, subsided into moments of silence, issued again between the teeth, spitting out smoke and stench, and in the midst of it all, Carl heard the mournful regular swishing of waves against keel, wind against sail. He opened the buckle of the strap and attempted to sit up, but he couldn't keep himself up. He was dizzy and horribly sick.

"Oh, hell!" he groaned, and some one from the

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wormy mess of men who were playing cards in great clouds of smoke, shouted, "Shut up, damn y'u."

His head fell back with a thud. "I don't care what happens! I hope this is the end. I hope they throw me overboard. Oh, can't this awful rocking stop!"

He imagined going overboard, sinking in the soft green waters. A little choking, then the weight and the stickness of terror, of ennui, of weariness, of sickness, all the pain in his heart and brain and stomach would be lifted from him.

Could any one suffer more? What a fool one is to wish to live! to fight death, when life is so horrible and death comes as the end of it.

"Oh, it is terrible! That smoke! that smell! those damned old pipes! Whew! The voices! Those cruel, thoughtless, heartless people and their voices! My head! What rocking! Oh, for a touch of solid earth!"

The waves swished cruelly! The wind flapped the sails. The boat dipped as if it had fallen away to the other end of the universe. The pain in his stomach was horrible. Pain and burning all through his body. "Is there nothing to life but pain? Is one ever entirely free from pain? Is there nothing in the whole world to relieve it all? Where am I? Where am I going to? Why am I tortured so? Where is George just now?" He stretched his hands out till he felt the cold iron bunk, then drew them hastily back. The iron, the cold iron. The hatchet was iron. Where was George? Was George struggling? Struggling bespattered with red, struggling in a pool of blood and he, he had thrown him into it! A cry escaped his lips and again the shout came back, "Shut up, damn y'u."

He dropped his head upon his arms and the soothing warmth of it brought tears again, and in his tears he found relief.

Aeons of time seemed to have passed by before

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the stick again prodded him and woke him. Then all that stretch of time shrunk back into a few moments. He was offered food and tasted some of it, but eating was the last thing he was concerned about. All the mental and physical agony came back with the return of consciousness. The storm that raged without raged more savagely in his brain. Another day was before him. Another day and still more prodding of the stick. He would not live through it! He was sure that he wouldn't and he felt himself sinking down into the sea, "to feed the fish!"

He lay that way all day, dozing off when too weary to endure his own thoughts, and sweating through the agony of fearing them when consciousness would not depart.

How the wind howled, and the sea waves moaned and groaned and swished! The schooner rose and sank and creaked, the wind flapped the sails and whistled with terror and with sadness. Feelings long dead came back to him. Feelings of childish fears and the desire of his mother's arms. He saturated the sleeve of his shirt and wept on the imaginary breast of his mother, while his feverish memory brought back the touch of her warm cheek.

Poor mother!

Through his mind's salty world went many creatures. He saw the dark, puny figure of his unhappy childhood, and his heart went out to it. The figure of himself struggling through slum youth! He wished he could go back to the *there* that was so intangible, so distant, and so dark; and take the sorrowful little fellow by the hand and lead him in a direction opposite to that which he had stumbled his way into.

Recollections of scenes and incidents and moods that clung to his thoughts of the reformatory, came to him and drew sighs from his pneumonic lungs, like the

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sighing of the wind and the waves and the sea. Memories of impressions suffered and collected at the prison up the river came and tormented him, and he promised himself that he'd never let them kill him, as they had killed other men there. He'd never let any one lead him like a cow or an ox to the shambles.

"That's the way it always was," he thought. "The reformatory was rotten, the damn prison was worse than the reformatory, this hole is worse than the prison, now what's yet before me?" The answer came back over the dark, howling, tossing salt world, *"The chair!"*

He tried to drive that answer from his mind by thinking of the sea out doors, listening to the howling wind as if his life depended on hearing every creak and groan. But the dreadful chair, his black picture of it, would not cease floating before his eyes. A queer thought came to his mind. The wind is seeking him. The ship is doomed!

"I hope it sinks! Yes, I hope it sinks! I'll be better off, done with it all. They'll never know what happened to me."

He fell asleep. His sleep was a short one, but it seemed to have been very long. The room was filled with smoke. Some of the sailors were still smoking and playing cards. Some had crawled into their bunks. He had hoped it was already morning, but it was only early night, he judged from what he heard, and was disappointed. Terribly disappointed. He hated the night and dreaded it. It was all still before him—the endlessly long hours of unappeasable storm, of wild, merciless winds tearing and pulling with fury at sails and boards.

"He can get locked up for that, when he pulls ashore," he heard one of the sailors say.

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"That's it," cried another. "Drunk or no drunk, he ain't got no right to kidnap nobody."

"Yes," said the only man that sided with the captain, "hang around New York all winter with first one 'n then another goin' off on a little spree."

"Hey there, Mate," said a hoarse-voiced fellow from one of the lower bunks, "the cap'n ain't around listenin'. There ain't no use o' y'r tryin' t'git next to 'im now. There ain't no 'xcuse for an honest man doin' sech a thing. An' if 'twas me, I'd knock the stuffin's out o' 'im when I got sober agin, if 'twas me as was jest grabbed and taken off the devil knows where."

"Y'r a damn liar," shouted the infuriated Mate. "I ain't taken no cap'n's part, but a thing *is* right when it *is* right."

"Right?" cried three voices at the same time, accentuated by hilarious laughter making its way between dirty rows of teeth that were clinging to their pipe-stems.

"Aw, shut up a minit," bellowed the angry Mate, "give a fellow a chance to talk. I wasn't sayin' at all as it was right f'r 'im to kidnip nobody, but I says it was right f'r 'im, and I say now it was right f'r 'im to be rippin' mad, hangin' aroun' New York half the winter, because a lot o' drunks can't come when they're s'posed to."

But the explanation was greeted with more laughter than the original remark had been, and, in utter disgust, the Mate threw his cards down on the table and left the forecastle. The game was broken up and the rest of the sailors retired.

Carl had listened to the conversation so intently that he had forgotten all about his pain and his fear. But little by little it died down and then Carl could feel that the fellow immediately behind him was very uneasy in his bunk. After squirming about and call-

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ing to a particular friend of his the fellow delivered himself sleepily thus, "I'll be hanged if I can sleep here. Damn 'im anyway. He kidnips a drunk or a loon f'r all we knows, an' sticks 'im in here with a lot of decent fellers. How the hell do I know what he'll be gettin' into his cocoanut to do t'night."

A drawn-out shriek of laughter came from below. "What y' afraid of? I hope the fell'w's listenin' an' gets up an' give you a right smart dip in the ribs that'll give y' somethin' to think about while you're layin' there and can't sleep."

"Y'r safe down there, aren't y'u, Billie? By the time he gets through cuttin' our throats, if that happens to be 'is manya, you'd be up an' ready to fight f'r y'r life, wouldn't y'u?"

"We'll give y'u as good a burial as befits a sailor, don't disturb y'rself on that score," said a fellow next to Bill, betraying in his voice the pleasure he took in his own wit.

Just then the Mate came back. They could tell by the way he climbed to his bunk in front of Carl, that he was still "sore."

A number of voices were heard from different bunks and the squeaky sounds they made started a hilarious laughter all through the cabin that mingled with the tearing and the flapping, the creaking and the groaning, the swishing and splashing out doors.

"Damn your rotten souls, all of you," cried the wretched Mate increasing the strange laughter, "I'd as leave kick the bucket over an' be done with it all. You bloomin' fools nag'in' me when I take the Cap'n's part and he raisin' hell with me because I take yours."

This was a very touching little speech and not a man continued laughing when it was ended.

The splashing waves went on splashing and dripping down again from the sticky, salty deck in a hor-

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rible rhythmic drip. The wind never stopped tearing and pulling and howling, and the boat tossed about with a mad struggle up and a despair-like drop down. The sailors slept and the dark space vibrated with their snoring, snoring which for some inexplicable reason, seemed to him like voices from their hearts, telling mournful stories of the loneliness of the lives they led. Yet he thought of becoming one of them, and the thought was a consoling one. He would get well and work with them—become one of them. He hated the sea, yet there was something about its wild loneliness that offered him protection. He was so remote. It seemed impossible to him that any one would be able to track him there. He was in another world —a lost world, and the careful creatures that had populated the one he knew would never risk the dangers of following him o'er that trackless wilderness. He would work as a sailor for years until his crime was forgotten, then he would return, find his mother and atone for the sorrow he had heaped upon her. There was great consolation in this planning and yet he had never wept more bitterly in all his life before.

Sick as he was, horrible as the tossing was, intense as was the craving for slumber, for oblivion, one thought would not let him sleep. Why was the fellow next to him afraid of him? Did he look like a murderer? Can people feel when a murderer is near them? Why should that fellow have been afraid of him, who hadn't opened his mouth yet? He pleaded with his God, with the force that stood for God, with the force that was responsible for his living and his sorrow. He had not meant to kill anybody. It had all been an accident. The wretched Androon had made his money by working girls to death, first in the shop, then on the street. But if that power, that God, heard, it did not answer.

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George was ever before his restless mind. "Has George been arrested? Has he escaped?" He saw them arresting him. He heard George sobbing in a cell. He longed to see his face. Oh, for a touch of him! Poor, poor George,—he had thrown him into the pool of blood, but he had never meant to do it that way.

He saw the black figure of Matilda, wringing her hands. Poor mother! And Anna. "They know I'm no good! Never was no good!"

The storm grew worse. The schooner was thrown from side to side at times, giving him the feeling that she had turned over and could not go back straight again. The storm grew still worse. The howling wind incessantly tore against cabin and sail and mast. It was the shrieking and groaning of a fiendish madness incarnate.

In spite of the straps Carl was lifted right on his side and his head struck an iron bar of the bunk. Another such a knock and his head would split open like Androon's. He raised his head in alarm.

"Tie them ropes up, you damn fool," cried the Mate. "Y'want to spill out and break y'r damned neck?"

Carl collected himself and tried to do as he was told. One of the sailors on the lower row of bunks got off his straw and came to Carl's assistance, swearing at the Mate under his breath for being too lazy to help the poor devil.

A few abusive comments and a few abusive replies were heard amid the din of the storm and then the storm alone was heard. In that sad and seething expansive barrenness, he fell asleep, and the schooner bravely ploughed on, with the help of a few puny men creatures with ropes tied round their waists, walking

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the deck, manipulating the sails and singing weird songs to the wind.

CHAPTER II.

Throughout the first week, Carl lay in a state of semi-torpidity, his consciousness, like a sea light, flashing up clear and dying right out by turns, feeling one day much as another, going through the same mental and physical agonies, condemning himself for what he had done at one time, and excusing the crime at another, regretting with burning tears the circumstances as well as the act, lying on his right side for hours, and railing at the impulsiveness that drove him to pay no heed to George's pleading, "to do it some other time." "At another time," he reasoned, "Androon might have been much more drunk and more easily managed."

When the tossing sea tossed least, he planned courses of action, sure that his whereabouts would remain undiscovered. At those times he was in a fairly happy mood, but never was he free from the fear of what might happen to poor George. He often thought of George as hovering about the scene of the crime, unable to leave it, as in a dream one cannot flee from the object of one's fear. At other times, and those times came often, he abandoned all hope, dwelling long and with terror upon the skill of detectives, as one sees the workings on a stage, the clever maneuvering that was finally to bring him to captivity and death—picturing the dark, shadowy figures that in the strange land he was going to might watch him like beasts their prey. At still other times, he lay for hours motionless and deathlike, looking into the little flat, and seeing his mother, in deeper black, wring her hands and weep, and Anna weeping with her. "I'll

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show her yet," a little voice would tearfully cry out from the heart, and reason would hush it, "You darn fool—no showing anything now—you'll have all you can do to keep from showing yourself."

Sometimes he would ask himself whether this dear safety, this dear liberty towards which he struggled, exerting all the energy of his being, was worth the struggle. He never answered that question, however earnestly he put it to himself, but often by way of answer, the sleepy child's desire for rest would come upon him, arousing in his memory sensations of the touch of cheek to cheek. He was ignorant of the source of those sensations, but his mother would not have been—she never forgot the feverish little forehead that she had pressed so often and so lovingly to hers.

Early one morning, at the end of the first week, he was driven from his bunk. Afraid that he would die, lying on the straw, the Captain ordered him to go out on deck. With his head dizzy and aching he stumbled out of the forecastle, hung on to everything that was stationary, frowned, breathed deeply, assuring himself that it would be much better to die than to suffer on as he was suffering. It was rainy and wet and he was miserably cold. With a dirty blanket wrapped around him, he found a spot against the wall of the cabin where a projection gave him something to hold on to, and there he sat down to gaze out at sea.

The sky was still covered with heavy gray and the wind still howled and tore, but the attitude of everybody on board as well as by the less violent tossing of the schooner, Carl felt that the rest of the trip was going to be less tormenting.

Some of the sailors and crew on their way to and fro in the performance of their different duties, stopped to say something to him, others ignored him entirely;

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and to the latter, he was most thankful. Some of those who spoke to him spoke with expressions of disgust on their faces, and some openly laughed at his weakness.

Thereafter Carl spent his days with his back against the cabin wall, gazing out at sea and doing more thinking each day than he had done throughout years of his earlier existence. At night he slept little, often waking several times a night and staying awake for hours at a time. What he thought in all that time was different from what he had ever thought in his life before, and many of those newly acquired notions painfully wrecked those he had built up with the bitter experience of his childhood and youth.

The vastness of the ocean over which they sailed and tossed gave him an interest in the great world on which he seemed just to have found himself, and the ideas of the existence of other worlds, ideas that he had casually come upon and that had made but the vaguest impression upon him, consumed a great deal of his attention now, and some times during the long evenings, weary of thinking of George, of escape and of being caught, he would search the skies with a queer interest, as if he hoped there to find some beacon light that would point his way out of the abyss from which there seemed to be no way out.

In the fear that something might be got from him that might later be used against him, Carl did everything in his power to discourage conversation with any one. When spoken to, fearing to give himself away in the smallest particular, he would hesitate before he answered even the simplest question, however remote from being personal it was. While he had been seasick, his bunkmates had called him a landlubber and had paid little attention to him; but when he got over his seasickness and still acted queerly, avoiding everybody, often mumbling to himself, and

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gazing furtively always at those who spoke to him; they began to whisper to each other assurances that he had not been drunk at all, and that there was something "awful" the matter with him. Fearing that he might any night break out into some fit of madness and do them all mischief, they provided a bed of straw for him below the hatchways and left injunctions with the men in the watch to "keep an eye on 'im." When first informed of the proposed change, Carl was seized by great fear, but when the one night below the hatchway came and he found that he could hear walking constantly on deck, he ceased to be afraid. Soon he was thankful that the change had been made, for it saved him the companionship of the crew and the possibility of giving himself away by talking in his sleep.

During meal times, he gathered a great deal of information concerning the mysterious trip he was making. He learned that they were taking a cargo of fertilizer to a small port on the Island of Porto Rico. He learned that Porto Rico was a "Spaniard" island, that nothing there was run right, that the Americans, if they did all the running of things there, would run them right, that the Porto Ricans were half savages, that everything they made was no good—even the rum which one had to drink for want of something better, that some of the girls were pretty, but none of them very "'ealthy," that what little railroad Porto Rico had was ridiculously inefficient, that one was at the end of the world when one was in that "God-forsaken hole," that it takes a month for one to get a letter from the States, and that it takes longer to get across the little bit of an island than it takes to cross the whole of the United States, the largest and the greatest country in the world. Most of all this was flatly and vehemently denied by the two Porto Rican members of the crew, who on several occasions, because of the

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vehemence of those denials, were very much in danger of their lives. Carl was very glad to hear both the accusations and the denials and felt that he couldn't have been more fortunate than to have stumbled into the protection of that schooner, and that if he could manage to escape in Porto Rico, he could live there the rest of his life without being discovered.

After many days of wet and cold, after many dreary days of the most exquisite discomfort, came a few days of delightful sunshine, and then, one day, to the distraction of everybody on board except Carl, they entered a calm, and, accompanied by angry oaths, he heard constantly the comment that "if this keeps up, we won't git there in a year." How he hoped they would not "git there in a year," though the food was anything but good, and the duties imposed upon him were not very pleasant.

He spent his evenings during that period of calm, while the schooner hardly stirred, and the ocean surface rippled like that of a small park lake on a moonlight night, with his back against the cabin wall, feasting and drinking his soul with the music of the infinite expanse.

Oh, those seas! Those skies and the reflections touching the ripples and wavelets with all that is sweetest in the dream of existence! The low sinking suns, streaking the evening skies with red laughter and gilding the sea surface with a smile that made the sea and the world so enchanting, so enticing. Carl was possessed with a great desire to sing, to fly out into the lovely atmosphere, and to dip into the soft warm waters. He would leave the cabin wall, lean against the railing and stare out to the dying sun over the sea like a man possessed, till the red laughing ceased and the smile faded slowly like the light of a lamp in which the oil had been consumed.

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One evening when that lamp went out, he saw the two Porticans coming in his direction. They carried queer-looking musical instruments in their arms and, passing him, walked to the stern of the boat and there sat down to sing and play. The singing was a strange sad singing and the songs were strange sad songs, but, without understanding either, Carl enjoyed both, and so did the rest of the crew.

For two weeks that calm prevailed, and every night of it Carl watched the sunset and listened to that music, and every night left him with a stronger desire to live, with a more ardent wish that George were with him.

Then came a little breeze and the schooner began once more to groan and heave. When Carl awoke next morning, he felt very dizzy and sick. The sea had grown rough again and the schooner made rapid time. Carl took to his straw under the hatchway, refusing to work or to eat. Then a few days later they entered another calm which lasted two days and then the breeze blew up again, and one day just as the sun was setting, some one joyfully cried, "Land," and every one rushed toward the railing and stared and commented upon what they saw. Some claimed it to be St. Thomas and others claimed it to be Culebra.

Carl had awaited that exclamation with great impatience. He had looked forward to the end of the long voyage with hope, yet as the end neared his anxiety increased and all his departed fears came back. So many of the plans he had labored over with so much nerve-wrecking thinking, seemed ridiculous to him now, and he was obliged to throw them back into the caldron, as it were, and pour their substances, the sweat dripping down his face, into other molds. What was he going to do in this strange land where he couldn't speak the language, where the people were so poor, and where there was so much of disease? The

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Captain had fed him for a month, would he allow him to get away? Wouldn't he watch him carefully, lest he get away? Wouldn't it be better for him to remain with the schooner under an assumed name? If he did remain, wouldn't the Captain get rid of him when they returned to New York?

Late the next afternoon they sighted land again. The trade winds carried them swiftly and directly, and towards evening they saw the lights of Porto Rico on their right and the fainter lights of Vieques on their left. They anchored within a stone's throw of a tiny island with no lights at all, which the sailors called Santiago Key.

What a night it was! Man never thought of a paradise more calm, more lovely or more beautiful! And yet that very calmness, that very quietness was fraught with terrors to Carl and he was overwhelmed with fear. What awful tortures awaited him on that fairy isle with its beautiful contour and its fascinating lights? He contemplated the shrouded islet of Santiago Key, and, grave-like as it was to him, he was several times on the verge of jumping overboard and making for its sepulchral protection; but the Captain was very nervous, sleepless, and continually about. Carl feared that if he tried such a thing and was discovered, not only would he be punished and watched even more carefully, but that such a desperate act might betray the secret within the depths of his soul with which they, anybody, might crush him. He went below, as all had been ordered to, so as to be up early next morning for the real work of the voyage. But he couldn't hope to sleep. Never in his life had he been more rent by mental storms than he was that night. The wildest and most dreadful thoughts, invoked the most dreadful and the wildest images and the terrifying images, in turn, evoked endless other terrifying thoughts. Every sound

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he heard was queer and ominous, the very atmosphere itself and the sky were strange and ominous.

"What am I going to do? What am I going to do?" he kept asking himself over and over again till he lost control of his tongue and it kept murmuring that question with machine-like repetitions. What if the direction of his escape had been discovered and all the boats leaving those docks had been listed and the destinations of each communicated with? Would men board the schooner on the morrow with a warrant for his arrest? Would all the sailors who had thought him strange tell of his strangeness? Twice he climbed up and peered upon the deck, hoping to find it deserted and to make his escape without notice, but both times he found men busy there. Concluding that they'd be busy all night, he began to reason that that was a futile plan even if it were possible. They'd know that if he wasn't drowned, he was on the little island, and would search for him. If they found him it would be worse for him.

Towards morning, for sheer exhaustion, Carl closed his eyes, but they had little time to remain closed. Hardly had he slept a few moments it seemed to him, when some one came along and shook him, demanding his immediate appearance on deck.

The crew had a hasty breakfast and then began a hustling and bustling that was bewildering. Derricks, ropes, pulleys, and men all were thrown into motion. Orders were shouted and instantly obeyed and Carl among the rest, with his eyes furtively bent on the shore, worked as if he had never been sick a day in his life. Soon the deck was covered with great triangular shaped piles of sacks filled with fertilizer. Then, in one of his furtive glances toward the shore, Carl saw an officious-looking little rowboat with half a dozen officials in it, leave a small platform and start for the

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schooner. Carl's hands involuntarily dropped to his sides, his heart beat violently and his limbs fairly bent under him. Orders were given for the members of the crew to form a line and to await examination by the official that was coming. The little boat approached. A rope ladder was thrown over the side of the schooner and the official climbed up on to its deck. He approached the captain and conversed with him for a few minutes in which Carl was tortured with fear and apprehension.

The official examined the Captain's "Bill of Health," and then proceeded to count the members of the crew, who stood on line. Finding the number of men corresponded with the number on the "Bill of Health," he conversed with the Captain again for a few minutes, then jumped over the railing, and went down the rope ladder; and, with a lighter heart, Carl saw the little boat row off.

If the Captain or any of the crew had had time to notice the change of expression on Carl's face as he worked after that they would surely have become suspicious of him He worked as rapidly as any of the other members of the crew, and they, without realizing the difference that had taken place in his activity, treated him as if he were one of them. From all he had heard, and now that he was assured that the detectives knew nothing about the direction he had taken, he concluded that it would be safer to risk getting along in Porto Rico than to go on with the schooner and return to New York. From the conversations at meal times he had learned that bad as Porto Rico was, it was a far better place to live in than any of the other islands that the schooner touched in its course. He was sure that Porto Rico was the best place for him, and watched for his opportunity to escape.

A whole fleet of rowboats appeared and helped the

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schooner into the small harbor. With a great deal of pulling, while the crew on board were hoisting out of the bowels of the schooner the sacks of fertilizer, the queer-looking Porto Rican boatsmen pulled the schooner up to a long board walk that reached from the center of the little bay to the shore.

Part of the deck railing was taken out and a long gang plank was lowered to the little platform at the end of the board walk, and as soon as everything was sufficiently secure, the crew supplied themselves with hand-trucks. Taking a sack of fertilizer each, they ran down the gang-plank and along the board walk to a long greenish wooden barn-like building on the shore where they left it.

Carl was glad to find that a hand-truck was not denied him and, taking a sack upon it, followed a string of men to the shore. Near the long greenish building was a large group of barefoot Porto Ricans sitting on every thing that afforded a seat, and jabbering rapidly. At first sight of these strange citizens of Humacao Playa, the port of Humacao, Carl's heart sank. When he reached the door of the barn-like building, he could look further into the town and see the thatch-roofed huts that constituted the village. From house to house walking, singing, yelling, calling to each other, was the population of Humacao Playa, almost everybody barefooted, children, woman and men. The few streets that led from that landing place were all lined with rickety thatch-roofed shanties. Small children in large groups, ragged, half and all naked, were seen everywhere. They looked so poverty-stricken to him, and their faces seemed so full of red blotches and pimples, he despaired of finding a refuge there and shoved away at his hand-truck with a heavy heart. There was no use runnig off there. Where would he go among so strange and poor a people? Who could and would

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help him there? He was really afraid of them, and, much as he tried to fight off this fear, his mind was slowly arriving at the counter decision that it was best for him to go on with the horrible schooner, though its course wound back to New York.

The more he saw these people, the more he feared them. Later in the afternoon he stopped at a store opposite the long green building where they left the sacks of fertilizer. It looked like a huge box with a thatch roof. Horizontally across it was an elongated window to which one stepped up to buy things, and the interior consisted of many shelves on which were very disorderly arranged some bottles and many strange-looking vegetables and fruits. The store-keeper had but a few inches each way to move about in and his dark brown weather-beaten face was one of the most fear inspiring faces Carl had ever seen. To Carl he looked like a dirty cannibal. He approached the elongated window and nervously deposited his nickle, asking in English for a drink. The dirty looking vender did not understand him and on his swarthy wrinkled face spread a smile that took Carl's breath away. Never had he seen so great a change come over any face. It was the very personification of kindness and respect. He bowed, shrugged his shoulders, and pointed to the different commodities on his shelves. A huge, green, hairy cocoanut interested Carl very much, and he made the appropriate motions for getting it. The vender then pulled out a long sword-like knife and striking the edge of the cocoanut, made a little hole in it and handed it to Carl. Taking the thing in both hands he drank every drop of it. It was delicious.

He went off with a smile and the vender smiled and bowed again, his face beaming with the kindliness expressed upon it and revealing something which made Carl say to himself, as he walked off with his hand-

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truck, "Their faces aren't mean, they are sad; maybe this fellow had lots of trouble." A dirty, half naked youngster in his play passed right against him, and Carl lowered his hand and patted his curly little head. The youngster turned his dark little face up at him and grinned from ear to ear, and some of the older men and boys who were sitting about watching the unloading of the cargo, smiled at him as if the bit of kindness shown the little fellow, was a kindness shown to all Porto Rico, which Porto Rico appreciated.

On his many trips to and from the schooner, Carl bowed and smiled each time he passed this group, and each time with the same warmth they responded, and once more Carl made up his mind that Porto Rico was his refuge and thereafter watched more carefully than ever for the opportunity to escape.

That opportunity came about two o'clock. The lovely, clear, blue Porto Rican sky, with a suddenness that was amazing, turned dark gray and before a dozen of the crew could reach the shelter of the long green barn-like building with their sacks of fertilizer, a terrific shower came down.

The men threw their burdens upon the well-laid heap of sacks, dropped their trucks and crowded into the wide doorway to watch the drops that came down with steaming rapidity. Carl didn't lose a moment in taking advantage of the situation. Grabbing his heavy truck with the abnormal strength that comes to us in moments like these, he carried it noiselessly to the other end of the long shed and hid it behind a stack of freight, then dropping down upon his stomach, he crawled through a hole that some one or something had dug under the wall. Pulling his hat over his eyes, he put on his worn old coat, and struck out into the vapory, flooded atmosphere. He hurried between two long rows of thatch-roofed shanties, but no one saw

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him, for every shanty was shut tight against the rain and none had windows in it. At the end of the long street he came into an open road, and seeing no one in the steaming shower, he started on a run and ran till he reached a turn where the road lay between two rows of tall Royal Palms and rich undergrowth.

The rain beat down furiously. The tall palms swayed, the underbrush fluttered in the stormy atmosphere, and Carl, his heart heavy with uncertainty and fear, plodded on, the water soaking down to his skin, pouring through his hat and down over his face.

By the time he reached the end of the winding avenue of palms, with a sudden termination that was as surprising as was the sudden beginning, the shower ceased, the dark, gray clouds were dispelled and from the midst of a perfectly blue sky, the sun drove down a heat that fairly drank the moisture up in streams, filling the valleys with vapor.

The road climbed up a rather steep hill. There Carl stopped a moment to look about him. Towards his left he could see a strip of ocean dazzling in the sunshine, towards his right he saw the tallest peak on the Island, a dark, gloomy sentinel with the only bit of cloud in Porto Rico's sky hovering about and over it like the smoke of a volcano. Everywhere were smiling green hills, one topping the other, and all falling away into large and small valleys. Before him his road lay in the midst of a vast lifeless sugar-cane plantation. Of all the elements of beauty of that wonderful landscape, the loneliness, the remoteness of it, impressed Carl most.

He descended the hill quickly and came among the tall sugar-cane stalks. "Where am I going to?" he asked himself. It occurred to him then as the uncertainty grew heavier and intensified his fear that it would have been better to have remained on the

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schooner, to have made one trip back to New York, and to have returned with George, for the two could manage well in this solitary place, where alone, he was afraid, he would not fare well. A nameless longing for George possessed him.

He quickened his pace. He was near the other end of the sugar-cane field, when he turned and saw just topping the hill, a carriage drawn by two horses. They were coming rapidly as if pursuing some one. Looking about him hastily, he dropped on all fours and slunk into the sugar-cane field. There with back bent he ran about in a winding manner till he thought himself safe, and sat down into the soft wet earth to wait till the flying vehicle passed. He listened with beating heart. The vehicle passed without stopping. He waited a few minutes longer, then cautiously made his appearance on the road again. The buggy had, after all, not been going so very rapidly, and he admonished himself for having been such a fool and such a weakling.

His road turned about a hill and fell away down a valley, and as he turned with it, he beheld two queer-looking riders ahead of him.

What if a cable had been sent to some bigger town and the message having been delayed, the messengers were but now making for the little port where they hoped to hold him up? He stopped to look up to the summit of a steep hill at his right. The hill was covered with a beautiful green carpet-like verdure. Not a tree was on it!

"It would be foolish to run up there," he thought. "Besides, they have surely seen me already."

He breathed deeply and walked on. Soon, to his relief, he saw that his fears were groundless. What his feverish imagination had turned into messengers of the society that hunted him, was but a group of

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barefooted, harmless peons on their lazy way home from the market. They rode small donkeys, everyone of which was burdened with a large panier on each side. On every basket was spread a piece of fur and on the fur sat the peon and whoever of his family was with him. One poor donkey carried a man, a woman, a child and the entire length of his pasture rope coiled about his nozzle.

Under every sombrero the swarthy-faced Porto Rican smiled sleepily. Carl met many such riders, and all bowed to him respectfully, and each greeting added another argument in favor of Porto Rico as his refuge. All their faces were sad, yet all found it so easy to break into beaming smiles. Some sang, filling the air with their singing, other groups came along chattering lazily and softly like half dried creeks in sultry summer.

He came upon a grove of Cocoanut palms, and saw with a shudder the open sea again. Humacao Playa, the port he had escaped, lay at the other end of a crescent shaped bay and before him, in the scintilating distance, with its mast cutting up the pink purple Island of Vieques, lay the schooner. He entered the grove and came upon a little refreshment store. Between the little store and a group of erratic-shaped palms in the freakish angles they made, hung a number of hammocks. Carl stole through the grove to the beach, where he could see the schooner, Vieques, and Santiago Key, much more clearly. The schooner was at too great a distance for him to see whether or not the crew was as busily at work as it had been, but he did want to see just that, and squinting his eyes, he made out the forms of the truckmen on the board walk, running along like ants. The sight of the schooner drove him on. Turning, he saw on the other side of the apparently deserted little store, a man seated upon

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a heap of green cocoanuts and lazily contemplating them. Carl walked up to him and asked for water. He was burning with thirst.

"Ah," said the man with a grin, delighted that he had understood the word water, for he prided himself on understanding "some" English.

"No tengo water," he answered still grinning, "Yo tengo agua de-coco." (I have no water. I have the water of the cocoanut.)

Carl replied, confusing the poor fellow who understood very little more than "water," then nodded affirmatively, and resuming the grin he had lost by his confusion, the fellow picked up a huge cocoanut, struck it deftly with his sword-like machete, made a small opening and handed it to Carl, who drank it down with great rapidity. Without inquiring for the cost, Carl poured a second one down his throat. He paid his cinquo centavos (five cents) right gladly and bowing his appreciation, went on his tramp, feeling better.

He came upon a group of huts along the roadside, and saw women seated on their sills, resting very contentedly and singing. In one hut he saw a woman ironing clothes, standing in her bare feet and singing at the top of her voice and with much feeling. In a third hut a woman sat on the door sill holding a naked baby and singing sweetly to it. In one hut he saw a canvas hammock swinging and the pointed hood of a sombrero showed that a man was enjoying life there. All of them seemed happy and contented and the songs they sang lingered in his mind long after he passed them in his aimless journey.

He passed many and great fields of sugar-cane, and saw about him in the distances, on the hillsides, and in the valleys single huts and clusters of huts. Herds of oxen stopped their lazy grazing and stared at him. Sometimes he was afraid of them, they were strange

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looking creatures, and had horribly long and crooked horns, such as he had not seen before.

He came to a break in his road. A less frequented roadway turned off diagonally to the left. A stone marked the cross-ways, and Carl sat down to rest awhile. He had cut himself a stick, and leaning upon it, gazed over the rolling landscape and thought. Oh, the wild thoughts that came into his soul and battled there, and in their battling, tore so violently and unmercifully. Hope pleaded with him not to devour himself, and yielding with a sigh, he started on again. Then as he walked on a short distance, it occurred to him that the captain might have postponed his pursuit to the evening, when it became too dark to work, and turning about he walked back to the cross-road, and took it, walking as rapidly as his strength allowed him. He had been traveling in too straight a line, he told himself, and decided to make as many turns as he could, asking himself as he hurried on, as he had asked himself a thousand times that afternoon, "Where am I going to?"

Passing a silent, seemingly deserted road-side hut, his road went down a hill right into a cluster of bamboo on the shores of a creek. Near the juncture of the road and the creek, on the side opposite him, stood a peon's hut, and swinging himself gently in a hammock in the door-way, lay the barefooted peon himself. Suddenly becoming aware of some one at the creek side, the peon jumped from his hammock with surprising agility, hurried towards the creek, waded across, saluted the stranger Americano, and offered him his services in a very unintelligible gibberish; but Carl did not understand a word he said. The peon smiled queerly at the predicament and then began to gesticulate with hands and feet and back, until what he wanted dawned on Carl.

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He had heard on the schooner all about being carried across creek in Porto Rico and laughing with anticipation, asked, "How much?"

"Hwon dollar," said the peon with a shrug of his shoulders and an expression that plainly said, "Just that little bit—that's all."

"One Dollar!" cried Carl showing his astonishment in every way that he could.

"Fif-i-ty centavos!" said the peon as if Carl had misunderstood him.

"No," insisted Carl with a show of impatience and sat down to pull off his shoes.

With great excitement, the peon sat down on his haunches.

"Mira, (look)," he cried, and with the assistance of ten rough stubby digits, began to count slowly and emphatically, "Uno, dos, tres, cuarto, cinqo, seis, siete, ocho, nueve, diez!"

With the ten fingers squarely in Carl's face, he repeated, "Diez centavos?"

"Five cents, I'll give you, that's all," said Carl shoving five of his fingers into the peon's face

With a grin the peon squatted down before him, and before Carl could think of his coat, which he had carried on a stick and which he had laid down when he had seated himself on the ground, he was half way across the creek, hanging on to the Porto Rican with his hands about his neck and his feet about his waist, fairly howling with laughter at the funny reflection they made in the water.

When he thought about his coat Carl began to yell at the peon in an attempt to make him understand, but the peon thought of the price of another trip and made believe he did not understand. When they reached the other side, he demanded another "cinqo centavos" for the second trip. Carl felt that he had no time to lose,

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and really afraid to cross the creek himself, gave him a second nickle and sent him for it.

On the other side again, the peon picked up the coat and deliberately shook the stick from it and without paying the least bit of attention to Carl's yelling came back with the coat.

Carl took the coat angrily from him, and started off. The peon saw that he had been mistaken in his hopes, and offered to go for the stick for "Uno centavo," but Carl paid no attention to him now.

Carl grew hungry and very weary walking. The morning's work, the afternoon's walk, and the tropical warmth had made him very tired and he began to think of resting. He came upon a sugar-cane field and was about to go for a sugar-cane stalk, which he had heard tasted very good, when from between the stalks issued a swarthy, ferocious-looking peon, carrying on his shoulder a long, ugly, sword-like machete, with which he had been cutting cane all day. This man did not greet him, and Carl was glad to see the ugly sugar-cane cutter disappear behind him. A turn in the road brought him face to face with a whole army of sugar-cane cutters, young men, old men, and boys trailing along behind, each with his machete on his shoulder. None of them greeted him. They passed by him without as much as noticing him, talking all together, in a weary monotone. Their bare feet tread heavily on the pebbled road and their thick-skinned soles minded but occasionally the sharpest of the pebbles. Their faces were pale and worn and in their eyes was no trace of the contentment that sparkled in the eyes of their more fortunate compatriots.

Carl understood. He went back in his own history to the time when he toiled all day and dragged himself home at night. He was sorry for them, especially for

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the boys; but he forgot them soon and occupied himself with his own troubles.

The day was waning. Evening, beautiful, lovely Porto Rican evening—the golden silence pierced here and there in the muffled distances by voices of women singing and children at play—was approaching and filling him with dread. His road turned and wound about till he came to the creek again. Here the creek was very shallow and studded with stones. Stepping from one to the other of these he gained the other side. Half an hour's walk from there brought him to a hill, from where he could see a large Porto Rican town. The low, odd-shaped houses spread over a great area, and their colors harmonized with the colors of the evening. He stood on the hill a moment contemplating the scene and debating within himself, whether he should enter the village and beg for help or whether he should slink off to some sugar-cane field like a shadow, till he could enter the village in full day-light. Finally he decided to go to the village, for he was afraid of the field at night. He would say he was looking for work and appeal for help in getting it. The idea seemed good at the time and he walked more rapidly.

The spell of evening was fully upon the village when Carl entered one of its many deserted streets. The houses here too, had no windows. Whatever openings Carl saw in the walls were more like doors than like windows, and many of them stood wide open so that in passing Carl saw that the greater part of the population were dining on their evening meal.

People stared at him, and staring furtively back, Carl's heart grew heavier than it had been. Was ever man more lost, more dissociated from his kind? Where was he going to? What was going to happen to him before morning came again? He was weary.

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His feet ached. His back ached, and he felt dirty and very uncomfortable. Like a stray dog lifting its nozzle and smelling about in the air as if it hoped to receive some whiff of welcome from somewhere, he stopped now and then to look about, but only to start off again feeling more lost in the confusing mass and row of masses, some looking as though a fairly strong gale would blow them over.

He treaded heavily and slowly down a few blocks of narrow sidewalk, gazing back at some of those who rudely stared at him, and came before a long porch at the first end of which suspended over the walk, he saw the sign, "Paris Hotel."

He stood a few moments near the steps leading to that porch, undecided as to whether to stop there or to go on, afraid like a freightened child, his heart beating annoyingly. He had turned for but a moment to look back, to see how far he'd have to walk to get out of the village again and turned to look into the hotel, when he found himself face to face with the ugliest animal he had ever seen. It was a man-creature, a misshapen pot. There was not a feature on that face or a visible part of his body that was not deformed or distorted. He carried an immense wicker basket on his head. His eyes were worse than crossed, one was bigger than the other and both stared wildly and idiotically. His waist was open about the neck, revealing a heavy growth of hair on his bosom. Two buttons, one blue and the other red, kept the rest of the waist-opening together. His ragged pants were much too short for him, and not a button was visible on them, all connections having been made with twine and nails. Below the ankles, his feet widened out most abnormally, while each of the queerly distorted toes took a different direction.

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Carl shuddered looking at him. "What do you want?" he demanded.

A broad grin spread over the large idiotic face and he answered something in a most inhuman grunt, then bashfully turning his eyes away, remained standing there motionless.

Carl stepped down into the gutter desiring to get out of the creature's way. Just then a slender woman, dressed in a white gown looking much like a night-gown, came out upon the porch and seeing the two of them ordered the idiot in angry tones to get into the kitchen, where they were waiting for him. The creature at once started a half walk and half jump movement till he got to the side door of the hotel and there disappeared.

"What do you charge for supper and staying over night?" asked Carl, looking up into the lady's face.

The dark face broke into a smile and reddened slightly. She did not understand English, she told him in Spanish, and went back into the hotel. Carl felt that she wanted him to wait and waited, leaning against the elevated porch and looking about himself. A group of country women passed him on their way home from a day of shopping, with their bundles, as always, upon their heads, talking earnestly with each other as they went. A quartette of dark-faced boot-blacks, barefoot and very ragged, carrying their little boxes on their shoulders approached him one after the other and each pointed at his shoes and jabbered away in Spanish.

Suddenly they left him and making for the hotel entrance began to call out, "Hello, Meester Don Federico."

Carl saw issuing from the reception-room, accompanied by the woman whom he had questioned, a middle-sized American, dressed in a khaki riding-garb and leather leggings. His hair was wet and neatly

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combed, his skin was tan and leathery, and his eyes were dreamy, sleepy eyes—they seemed but half open.

"You want to see me?" he inquired softly, approaching the banister where Carl stood.

"I want some place where I can get a bite to eat and a place to stay over night," said Carl, "I'm looking for work and—"

"Come on in, wash up and have something to eat first," he replied with sleepy slowness, and Carl, with great relief, followed him into the reception-room. It was a rather spacious room furnished with a piano, a small center table and nearly a dozen rocking-chairs. A few pictures hung on the walls and from the center of the ceiling hung down an electric wire and a bulb. Carl was shown into a small side bedroom where he washed himself enthusiastically. When he came out again he was very much improved in appearance, though he still looked like a tramp. The strange American was sitting in a rocker smoking his cigar as if he were half unconscious. One of the little boot-blacks was sitting on his lap, one was standing on each runner and rocking with him as he rocked and the fourth hung on behind. All of them were questioning him. At sight of Carl he rose from the rocker and the youngsters scattered.

They went into the dining-room, a long, narrow room, one of the walls of which was open like a huge window. There were two long and narrow tables, and two small round ones, and over each dangled an electric bulb. The sparkling glass ware, the bowls and dishes, the noise coming from the court-yard, the palm leaves above the building on the other side of the court-yard, their graceful silhouettes cut clear against the evening sky, the loud, noisy conversations of the many resident boarders and travelers, the cigarette smoke, the clanking of bottles, the laughter and the shouting, be-

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wildered Carl, and he followed his benefactor, hardly knowing where he was going to.

At one of the small tables near the open wall sat three other Americans, a young man and two young women. Here the sleepy American stopped, hastily excused himself, and led his guest to the second small table, near the other end of the open wall. Carl sat down facing the mysterious court-yard and the palm leaves above the other building, while his host sat down with his back towards the three Americans.

The waitress, a barefoot middle-sized girl, with a dirty white dress considerably torn, came to get their orders and Carl asked his host to order things for him. While waiting for the food, he stared out into the court-yard, afraid to talk. Night was lowering heavily upon the palm leaves beyond the buildings that enclosed the yard, in the center of which was a pump and the awful looking idiot whom Carl had met in front of the hotel, in a fiendish dance-like motion, was pumping water and laughing a loud inhuman laugh that filled the court-yard and amused the diners. From the mysterious darkness of the other building came the shrill cries of a parrot, and below it and towards the extreme left a woman was scolding the servants, her husband and her children, all of whom made noisy responses. In all that chaos Carl heard distinctly the laughter of the American girls and the voice of the young man amusing them. He stole several glances at them while he ate his food and envied them with all his soul.

"You come a great distance?" asked Don Federico.

"I've been all over the Island, I guess," replied Carl blushing.

"I suppose you are very tired."

"I am awful tired."

"You have to go on to-morrow?"

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"No, I don't have to. I got to get work though."

"What kind of work do you do?"

Carl was horrified. It was as if that question necessitated a confession. He looked embarrassed. "Well," he said hesitatingly, "I can do most anything."

"I have plenty of room," said Don Federico. "You might stay a few days and rest up."

Carl muttered his thanks, and hoped he would ask no more questions. Don Federico sensed his embarrassment and said no more to him.

Carl was very hungry. The food was a strange food, but he ate everything in sight, eating in silence, and wondering as he ate and listened to the merriment at the American table, why Don Federico had given up such delightful company for that of a wretched tramp, like himself.

One by one and group by group the people at the other tables rose and passed out and Carl and Don Federico were left alone. Don Federico smoked his cigar and stared dreamily into space, and Carl ate what was put before him. When through, both of them rose and went out upon the street. Every bone in Carl's body ached. He could have cried, so great was the pain in his swollen feet. He shambled painfully at Don Federico's side, his lips sealed, his mind working with great rapidity, dreaming great dreams and horrible dreams, courting hope with all the ardor in his soul and fighting fear that with the strangeness of the place was stealing in upon him.

They came upon the plaza in the center of the town—there is no Porto Rican town without a plaza. The stores surrounding it constituted the business section of the village and threw their many lights upon the trees and the stone walks and seats. The little park buzzed with people circulating it in a steady stream. The men wore white linen, and the women wore white

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and colored goods with gaudy-colored ribbons. In the brilliantly lighted cafes, about the plaza, sat noisy groups of men playing and talking. From one direction came the shrieking sounds of a phonograph, from another came the sounds of a practicing band.

Wherever they went Carl saw men bowing to Don Federico and he made up his mind that this queer "half-dopy" individual, this "easy mark" that was befriending him, was some kind of an official. Wherever they went youngsters rushed out of buildings and greeted Don Federico who would stretch out his hand to pat them.

They came to a poorer section of the town. These streets were dirty and not well lit. The houses were dirty and very rickety. They too were poorly lit and in their dim light one could see here and there the ravages of poverty. Women sat on rockers, rocking slowly and worrying. There was an atmosphere of anxiety about the section. Here too Don Federico knew everybody. Here too everybody bowed to him.

They came to the outskirts of the village. Groups of barefooted youngster, like rats, stealing out at night, issued from dark hole-like houses and from alley-ways, or streets that looked like alley-ways, and after shouting their joyful greetings to Don Federico, followed him, and as they neared the house in which he lived, the pack grew large.

They came upon an old Spanish house that stood by the road-side partly hidden by trees, vines, and shrubbery. Passing through the gate of the fence, they ascended a stairway that began very wide and with a graceful sweep tapered to the width of the large entrance door, opening out upon the porch.

Carl had hoped that the youngsters, behind them, would leave as soon as they reached the house, but he was mistaken. When they came to the tapering stair-

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way, they lost control of themselves and helter-skelter ran up the stairs, fairly breaking into the old house, and filling it with the sound of their flopping bare feet and the rapid wagging of many tongues.

Don Federico did not utter a word of objection. If Carl could have seen Don Federico's face, he would have been sure that the man was "dopy," for it was lit up with joy as if the noise were sweet music to him. The older boys rushed into the various rooms as if they were accustomed to doing so, and soon came back with lamps which they took great delight in trimming, cleaning and lighting.

Carl stopped in the first room which he entered and waited for a light. As soon as the boy lit the lamp there, Carl looked about himself anxious to see the interior of the old house, the exterior of which did not impress him very favorably, for it looked too gloomy and desolate.

Carl threw himself into a rocker and Don Federico seated himself in his desk chair in the center of the room, and near a huge flat-topped desk. The lamps having been lit, the twenty or more boys in the house clattered for seats, as many as four of them piling into each available rocker, some occupied the few chairs in the room, and others were obliged to stand, leaning against those who were seated and gazing at Don Federico who searched in a drawer in his desk till he found the box of cigars which he had been seeking and handed one to Carl.

A group of some half dozen very small children, all black, dirty, half naked, with dirty bits of rags hanging from their limbs, pattered up the stairs and entered, looking about cautiously, hardly knowing what to make of the stranger and uncertain as to the effect his presence was to have upon their relations with Don Federico, till the latter called to them, smiling as kindly as

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he had no doubt always done. They then made a grand rush for the Americano, for their Don Federico, and to Carl's utter disgust, he embraced them, as many as could get into his arms and rubbed his cheeks against their kinky hair, looking at Carl as he did and smiling. Carl responded with but a very faint smile. Now he was sure the man was crazy.

After patting them for some time, he stuck his hand into his pocket and pulled out a small bag filled with pennies, and proceeded to give one to every youngster in the room. The whole proceeding looked like a regular, periodical affair. As soon as every one had his penny, they started up and rushed in the back rooms and began at once to make all the noise they were capable of making. They sang and yelled and danced and pounded away on horrible musical instruments. Don Federico said never a word. The noise was deafening. Carl was almost angry at him for allowing such a thing, but he said nothing, merely gazing about the room, examining it. There was very little ornament about it. A few pictures on the walls hung crookedly and in one the glass was broken. A heap of books were piled disorderly upon the desk, and many such heaps were piled along the walls, and upon the table. In a corner near the window stood a phonograph with a cabinet for records. Near the door, on the floor, lay two saddles in a heap with all manner of straps issuing from them half way across the floor.

A well-dressed young Porto Rican, carrying some books under his arm, entered. Don Federico rose, and shook hands with him, then introduced him to Carl, Carl giving his name as Michael Rivers. The young man seated himself near the desk and Don Federico leaning back in his desk chair, smoked his cigar and questioned him concerning his pupils, from which Carl took it, that the young man was a teacher and that

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Don Federico was a higher official in the schools. Presently two Porto Rican young women and a young man came in; after shaking hands with them and introducing them to Carl, Don Federico went on talking and smoking, merely raising his voice when the noise coming from the other room made that necessary. Still other teachers came. Don Federico signed certain blanks which they all brought with them and handed each of them supplies of blank books, text books and pencils.

Then the two American girls and the American young man appeared. They were still very happy. The young man was still saying funny things, and the two young women laughed very heartily. Don Federico did not shake hands with them. He merely greeted them coolly, nodding and smiling spiritlessly, then introduced them to Carl.

"Now, Mr. Rivers, you have some one to talk to," said Don Federico after the introduction, and then turned to his Porto Rican teachers.

The native teachers had greeted Carl very warmly, but the American teachers were very cold and formal. They hardly looked in his direction, and when they did, Carl was very miserable and felt very much out of place. He was a tramp, an outcast, and they had no use for either. When Don Federico had attended to the native teachers, and turned to the three Americans, Carl stole out upon the porch.

To his surprise, the porch was crowded with villagers. They sat on the steps, on the banisters and on the sills of the open windows of an unoccupied room. Some were barefooted and others wore the costliest foot gear. Some were dressed gaudily and others were dressed very simply, and still others very poorly. All seemed to be awaiting something. Carl remained standing in the doorway, confused, unutterably lonely,

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miserable, uncomfortable and his heart very neavy. The waiting crowd spoke softly in a rapid monotone. He could not understand a word they said, but he felt that they were talking about him.

When all the teachers had gone, Don Federico came out on the porch, and after greeting the people in Spanish—they responded very warmly—he turned to Carl, and wished to know whether Carl desired to go to bed or whether he cared to hear a little music.

The thought of going off into one of the rooms of that lonely, gloomy house was not a pleasant one to Carl, and he expressed himself to the effect that he'd like to hear some music.

"Come on in," said Don Federico, "and sit down near the window. You can hear it better there."

First, Don Federico sent all the youngsters home, then he placed a green shade upon his lamp, subduing the light, and followed that by placing a record upon the machine, starting it off, and hurrying back to his chair, where he got into a comfortable position and listened carefully. The crowd out doors instantly ceased talking.

The record was of a violin solo It was sad and soft. Every one seemed to enjoy it. They expressed their admiration in enthusiastic comments, but the green light, the half sleepy music, the mysterious voice of the violin solo, and the silence made Carl fearful and he wished it were morning.

He played a number of other solos. The Porto Ricans all enjoyed them, but Carl became more and more fearful and grew very restless. Don Federico saw that Carl was restless and asked him what he would like to hear.

"Something lively," said Carl, smiling a sickly smile and moving about nervously in his rocker.

Don Federico understood. He pulled off the green

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shade on the lamp and went for the one burning in the other room to make things brighter. He placed a humorous record on the machine, and to Carl's disappointment it had no better effect upon him; but he was grateful to Don Federico for his pains, and said he enjoyed it very much, and Don Federico accordingly played as many more of that kind as he had.

Looking out of the window, Carl saw that one by one the auditors were quietly leaving. Don Federico played another record, and still another one. When that ended, the last of those, who had come to hear, rose and walked off and the old Spanish house became oppressively silent. Don Federico had reached the conclusion that his visitor had something on his mind that bothered him, and hoping to relieve him, sat down in his desk chair after having closed up the machine, and began to smoke very violently and to question him as he smoked.

"I suppose you really want to go to bed," he began, "you've been walking all day."

"I walked more than all day."

"You say you came from San Juan?"

Carl grew red in the face, and stirred in his seat very nervously.

"I really don't know the name of the place. I just happened to land there."

Don Federico pulled the cigar from his mouth and continuing to stare out of the window, said softly, "Didn't you say you were working at a hacienda on the other side of the Island, or did I just think that?"

Carl didn't remember what he had told him, and felt that Don Federico had caught him in a lie, but the way the question was put, gave him the clue to the proper answer.

"No," he said, "I guess I just said I was working on the other side, I meant the States."

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"Oh, yes, I see," said Don Federico, "that's probably what you did say. What is your line of work?"

"I guess I ain't got none in particular," said Carl, crossing his legs.

"That's not fair," said Don Federico almost in a whisper, "a man has no chance—a man can't get along in this world without having been taught some kind of a trade. Is there anything in particular you are looking for? Is there any kind of a trade you want to learn?"

"I don't know," sighed Carl, "I'd be willing to do anything—to learn anything, if it ain't too late."

"Too late!" said Don Federico surprised, "you are a boy yet. You've got a long life before you. I don't know what the chances are for your finding work here. The ordinary laborers are worked to death. They don't want American laborers, because they can't work them as well as they can work the native. Unless you are a specialist, unless you have a trade—"

Don Federico didn't finish his sentence, and Carl had no need of speaking, he showed his alarm plainly enough by the expression of his face.

"Don't worry about it anyway," said Don Federico, rising from his seat, "you can stay here awhile if you want to, till you find something and if you should be unable to find anything to do, we can manage to get a ticket to New York for you. Suppose we go to bed now. Rest up a bit, and you'll feel much better."

Taking one of the lamps, Don Federico led him to a spacious unoccupied room back of the other front room. In the middle of the floor stood a rickety cot and near it an old chair on which was a piece of candle in a sea of melted, rehardened tallow. Here he left him.

All the fear he had had, was as nothing, compared with the fear he felt creeping upon him as he undressed

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in that frightfully bare room. A thousand recollections and sensations awoke in his mind and set his imagination aflame. The more he tried to drive the flashing pictures from his brain the more persistent were they in recoming, and he sank into his cot, and covered his head with the sheet, pressing his hand hard against his temples.

The silence was dreadful. He tried to force sleep upon himself, but his eyes would not close. A faint ray of light crept through a doorway, crossed the hallway and crept into his room, telling him that Don Federico was still up, smoking or reading; but after a while, he saw the light go out, and heard Don Federico walk off into a still remoter room. The clock in the office was ticking in horrible measured ticks, cutting into the silence and into his mind. Crickets, peepers, and toads were hammering away upon the atmosphere. He associated their noises with wet earth, and the thought of wet earth, sickened him. About his bed, walking the bare-floor, was George. By his bedside knelt his poor mother, weeping and wringing her hands, and Anna stood beside her, her hands on her shoulders, pleading with her. Suddenly out of the abysmal darkness came a voice. He heard it, he was sure he heard it. The voice was his mother's. She was calling him. He heard his own name distinctly. It came into his diseased imagination and sunk down to his heart, tearing the tissues as it sank. He raised his burning head, and peered through the darkness to the window and about the room. Through the wooden shutters, he saw shadows gliding to and fro. He jumped from his bed and stole up to the window, peered out between two laths of the shutters, saw the palm leaves stirred by the breeze and went back to his cot.

He buried his forehead in his hands on the pillow,

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but the heat of his hands helped to fire his forehead. He shoved them under the pillow and dug his forehead into the pillow itself, but suddenly he heard his mother whisper, "Carl," again. He stuffed his ears, but he heard it just the same. There was no hope whatever of sleeping, no matter which way he turned, and he kept turning from side to side constantly. The pillow became harder and harder and his head almost split upon it. He tried to think of things he could or might do to get his mind away from the phantoms his imagination was raking up, but it was useless. The more he sought to flee from them, the more they gathered about him and the harder they pounded on the gateway of his soul, till he thought that at any moment they would break through and pour in, to annihilate him. The sound of his mother's voice persisted and the weeping was unbearable. Men were hunting him. Like blood-hounds he saw them nose about anxiously, seeking trail of him. It was a matter of moments before the detectives would be nearing him—would be knocking at the door.

Suddenly the air was rent by a most unearthly banging. Before Carl could make up his mind as to what it had been, it ceased, and listening, Carl feared he had heard nothing, that his feverish brain, going mad, was the source of the sound. He jumped from his cot again and, trembling as if he were cold, he stationed himself at the window and peered out and listened. Hearing nothing, he returned to the cot and fell upon it face down. He had just touched the bedding and was bobbing up and down with the rebounding springs of the cot, when the banging was resumed again, and again as soon as he could quiet himself enough to listen, the banging ceased. Again he left his cot and this time he tiptoed to a side window and through the laths there he saw a man in the light of a

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street lamp on the porch of a small box-like house. He waited and watched him, hoping that he would bang again. The man finally did begin again, and seeing him pound the door, Carl was relieved. But unfortunately in watching the man, Carl saw in the night light an excavation near that house where some one was going to build another. The open earth looked like a sepulchre. He turned from the sight quickly, and before he reached his bed he saw with maddening clearness, his own horrifying grave. His bed became an electric chair with straps, and try as he would he could not get himself to touch it again. He tried hard to reason with himself, but it was useless. The touch of that cot would send the "juice" through him and nothing could make him touch it, and, fearing that he was losing his mind, he lit his lamp and rushed out of the room with it, in search of Don Federico.

"Hey, there, Mister!" he cried when he had located him by the sound of his breathing.

"What's the matter?" asked Don Federico somewhat alarmed, sitting up in his bed, encaged by his mosquito netting.

Carl's hands trembled so he could hardly hold his lamp, but as soon as he saw the alarmed expression on Don Federico's face, he controlled himself, spread a grin over his face and said good-humoredly, "I guess I had a nightmare."

"Can't you sleep?" asked Don Federico, looking as if he were still asleep, trying hard to adjust his eyes to the sudden light.

"I had a nightmare all right," insisted Carl, looking silly in his attempt to hide the terror that was within him "I'm not used to the quietness. An old drunk came along and banged on the door of the house off there, till I thought he was going to pull the thing down. I'm not used to this. I can't sleep in there."

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"Bring your cot in here."

"All right," said Carl eagerly, and pulling aside his netting, Don Federico stepped down and went to help him get it.

"I know what's the matter," said Don Federico looking down at the cot. "The mosquitoes have been bothering you. I forgot to give you the netting."

Fearing that Don Federico would give him the mosquito netting and leave him there, he hastened to remark that that didn't bother him at all.

They carried the cot into Don Federico's bedroom and fixed the netting like a canopy over it. Fifteen minutes after the arrangement was completed Don Federico was again sound asleep and his deep breathing became a new source of torture to the sleepless Carl. His ugly thoughts came back again. The sound of the sleeper was turned into all manner of voices and the weeping and wailing it suggested drove him frantic. The bloodhounds began to wriggle their red bodies and shove their sniffing noses along his pathway, the winding pathway over the pathless ocean.

The hours went by. The clock ticked. The peepers out doors peeped violently. The sleeper breathed deeply and horribly. Carl's forehead burned. The cot turned into an electric chair again. He saw himself being thrust into the black gaping hole. Soon he began to feel needles go through him. He fought bravely to drive the thought from his mind, but it wouldn't go. The needles came fast and o'erwhelmed him. With a groan that awoke his benefactor, Carl sat up on his cot.

Don Federico started up again and lit the lamp. This time Carl was unable to play the part he had played before. He was breaking down. He was in the deepest despair and was ready to let go in the awful tug-of-war. He didn't care any more what the

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man might think. He sat like an insane man, his head lowered, the tears streaming down into his overgrown beard.

"Shall I go for Doctor Hammel?" asked Don Federico concernedly.

"No, for Christ's sake, don't."

"See here, my boy," said Don Federico, looking down at him. "Are you awake, or are you having another nightmare?"

Carl shook his head and Don Federico was overwhelmed by the sadness on the boy's face. He stepped down from his bed, pulled the netting aside and, seating himself near Carl, placed a hand on his shoulder and asked him very softly, "Are you sick?"

The touch of that hand completely crushed him and Carl wept like a child. He was ready to tell this man everything. He was not a man, he was an angel, he would never betray him. He might help him. Why shouldn't he tell him everything? He began to speak his confession, but checked himself, thinking, "Fool, no man will help a murderer."

"Gee, this place is awful!" said Carl collecting himself. "I ain't used to such quiet at all. I suppose you think I am crazy."

"Oh, no, it's natural for you to feel that way—you're not used to it."

"I ain't feeling very good, either," went on Carl, disgusted with himself "I haven't eaten a decent meal in a month or more."

"Will you have a smoke?" asked Don Federico, getting two cigars from the chair by his bedside, handing him one, and returning to his own bed, where he sat up on the pillow.

"I don't mind the quiet at all," he went on after a number of puffs at his cigar. "I suppose if I went

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back to New York, I wouldn't be able to endure the noise."

"You from New York?" asked Carl.

"Well, yes. I lived in New York a long time ago —must be twenty years now."

"Gee, I was a kid then," said Carl with a deep sigh, then regretting that sigh, hastened to hide the emotion it betokened in an attempt to assure his listener that the quietness of the latter's home was alone the cause of his mysterious actions. "An' you've been living in this God-forsaken town all that time!"

Don Federico smiled "No, I knocked about a great deal before I got here—New Orleans—Key West—Havana—Santo Domingo. I'm here about nine years now, I guess."

"Nine years in this place!"

"This isn't a bad place at all," said Don Federico, pulling the cigar from his mouth. "I've never in my life been contented anywhere else."

Carl puffed away at his cigar and listened and Don Federico went on slowly and sleepily. "Sometimes I feel like selling everything and going back to New York, but I really am afraid to do it. I'm afraid I should have a hard time there. I struggled before I left it; I would have to struggle harder there now. Sometimes, when I think of it, I can hardly go on with my work. I get the desire to drop everything and go back."

Carl half closed his eyes and said nothing.

"I've cut myself off entirely from the past," he went on. "I don't know why I have. This was such pleasant living after all the struggling and fighting I've done. Riding out over the hills, the mountains—the pleasant, good natured people—I like it very much—it is paradise. I don't think I could live in New York now. I know I couldn't."

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"You expect to live here all your life?"

"I could. But I have been planning, in fact I must go back sooner or later. I want to save up enough to —we have a farm in the Catskill mountains—I want to save up enough so that I can go back, take care of my mother, and live on the farm for the rest of my life—without worrying."

"You don't like New York."

"No, I never cared much for the big city."

"Lots of fun in New York for some people."

"I never did care much for the *fun* of New York. It's not a healthy fun."

"I mean, don't you know," said Carl somewhat uneasy, "you'd call it pleasure. I mean—when a fellow goes to the 'movies' with his girl, drinks a beer or two, not enough to get full on, mind you, and spends the night like that."

"Well, there isn't so much fun to that, after all. You're a young man yet, Mr. River. There comes a time when that kind of fun is not enough, when that isn't worth anything unless you are well fixed otherwise. It's all right to go to the 'movies' with your girl and sit down to drink your beer, if you like that, but there is much more to life that one must consider."

"Oh, yes," sighed Carl.

"Suppose there are others depending on you? Suppose your job doesn't give you very much? Suppose you are not sure of keeping it very long? You've got to look ahead. You've got to ask yourself, what is going to happen when these things don't interest me any more? What connections must I make with life in order that life will be worth living? By that I mean a fellow's got to be sure of his living before he can think of a good time. Your speaking of fun started me off this way. I was thinking of what was before

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you, really. That is why I have been able to remain here so long. That is why I have not gone back to New York. For the first time in my life, I found a position here, that not only gave me a fairly decent salary, a position that was fairly secure, too, but for the first time in my life I came upon a work that I enjoy doing. That is why I stick."

"You never went back even for a vacation?"

"I really haven't had a vacation. The department has had something for me to do every single summer since I took the position. I like the place and am anxious to keep it. I'm glad to do what is asked of me, though I'm thinking that by next summer I must take off a few weeks and go back.

"Every man's got to establish himself or he is doomed. That came upon me in New York. I could not bear the thought of establishing myself as I saw those around me established, and fled. I didn't go very far, however, before I realized the necessity of doing so. No, sir, I don't want to be without my connections any more. A man's lost without them."

"I had a chance to learn," said Carl thoughtfully, "but I was too much out for pleasure to learn anything. Even when a kid I was the same way, though the devil knows I got mighty little of that. For a fellow like me there just ain't much chance for establishing himself. A fellow like me's got to be a common workin' man working ten hours a day, an' if he don't like that, the best thing he can do is kick the bucket."

In his soft sleepy voice, between puffs, Don Federico tried to assure Carl that that was not the case, getting weary of his own philosophical meandering as he did so. Suddenly looking toward Carl he saw that his head had dropped on his shoulder and that he had fallen asleep. His large overgrown tuft of hair had fallen over his forehead and eyes and between that

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tuft of hair and the hair of his unkempt beard were patches of pale skin, deep-sunken.

Don Federico sat smoking, his sleepy eyes riveted on the sorrowful Christ-like face till his cigar was almost exhausted. Throwing the stub away, he sat back against his pillow, and himself fell asleep.

CHAPTER III.

Carl woke with a start late next morning, just as the climax of a bad dream had sent him off on a run. The shutters being closed, the room was dark, but streaks of golden sunlight broke through between lathes and played upon the floor. From without came the sound of children playing. Not far from the window, out doors, two men were talking very excitedly, and in the distance a woman was singing beautifully, at her work.

He sat up on his cot and looked over at the sleeping form of Don Federico. He was miserably ashamed of himself. "What will this man say? What will he think? He'd have to be a fool not to think that something is wrong, and he looks like anything but a fool, though he certainly is very queer. 'Pitch in together and send me back to New York, hey?' "

Carl hurried into the other room, found his clothes, dressed, and went out upon the porch. For a moment the light dazzled him. In the distance, he saw an extensive green valley, beyond that were many green hills, so steep, they looked like great mountains. The old Spanish house was surrounded by odd shaped trees and shrubs and very beautiful flowers, and to one less burdened than he was, it would have seemed a veritable paradise. It made but a faint impression upon him.

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"What shall I do?" he asked himself over and over again. "Suppose I can't get work? If I refuse to go back to New York, they'll suspect me."

He descended the stairs and took the road turning on the first to the right. Not far from Don Federico's house ran a shallow creek. Here sat the woman he had heard singing when he had awakened. She was washing clothes. She stopped singing at his approach and carefully covered up her bare limbs with her skirts. How needlessly—he hardly saw her. He made his way across the creek by stepping on the projecting stones and on the other side broke across a grassy meadow. At the end of the meadow he came upon another road running between two sugar-cane fields. This took him to a little hut at the foot of the highest of the hills, and back of that he found the path going up. He began to climb and climbed till he was out of breath. He stopped a moment to look back. Humacao lay in the basin like a children's village of doll-houses. Again the questions, "Where am I going to?" and "What shall I do?" began to feed upon him, and drove him on. He passed a thatch-roofed hut. A woman sat in the doorway with a naked baby in her lap. He stopped to stare at her. He envied her. The woman was afraid of him. She rose and hurried into the hut. There was no hope there. He passed on.

Near the summit of the hill he came upon another thatch-roofed hut. A woman worked within it and sang till the dog announced his approach, then she stopped. Half a dozen children, some of them naked, played about happily till they saw him. The father of the little household was back of the house driving a lazy ox hitched to an old-fashioned wooden plough—he stopped a moment and stared at the stranger.

Carl went on. At the summit he was overwhelmed

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by a sudden realization that there was no refuge in Porto Rico's hills. What could he do there? The people only stared at him.

Way off, a great distance from Humacao, was Humacao Playa, the port of Humacao, and beyond that he could clearly see Vieques and Santiago Key. Where was the schooner? Was it impossible to see a schooner that far, or had the schooner already departed? He remembered their speaking of remaining at Porto Rico long enough to unload the cargo and was inclined to believe that the schooner was gone. He was glad of that. The valley on the other side of the hill was fascinating, the great peak lost in the only bit of cloud in the sky was awe-inspiring, but Carl could not endure beholding either. He had become anxious. He had run away from Don Federico. Where had he run to? What for? What would Don Federico say about it? Would he think him crazy?

"I'll tell him I went out for a walk," he decided, and hurried down at breakneck speed. Suppose he goes away for the day? Suppose I can't find him? He began to realize the importance of staying with Don Federico, and almost broke his neck in his hurry to get back to the old Spanish house.

Don Federico was seated at his desk eating his breakfast of coffee, rolled bread, and butter. His kind face lit up with a smile. Before Carl could say a word, he asked, "Out for a walk?"

"Yes," said Carl betraying the fact that he was ashamed of himself, "I thought that you would sleep late, so I went up that hill way off there."

"You did," cried Don Federico. "Well you certainly've got plenty of energy. You'll lose it soon in a place like this. Here's your breakfast, help yourself."

Carl hesitatingly helped himself to some coffee and

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bread and butter and Don Federico encouraged him to eat plenty of it.

They talked again of getting work and Don Federico repeated his offer to keep him till he got work or decided to go back to the States. Several times Carl thought of telling him that he hated New York, that he would rather die than go back, that he only got into trouble there; but each time some little reason popped up in his mind advising him not to do so.

A boy came in, greeted Don Federico with a grin and handed him his morning's mail, then flopped into one of the rockers. Don Federico shoved back the empty coffee pot and proceeded to read his mail, while Carl, through with his breakfast, gathered cups, coffee pot and what bread and butter was left and took it all into the little kitchen. From there Carl went out into the yard and examined that. There were many wooden boxes about on the cement floor near the cistern opening. At the rear end of the yard, a gate opened into a very neglected weed o'er grown garden.

"I have to go to inspect a school in a neighboring town," said Don Federico when Carl came back, "and will probably be gone all day. I will pass by the hotel and arrange with Senora Martinez to give you your meals. I'll be home between eight and nine o'clock."

For a moment Carl's heart sank. He had hoped to be able to come to an understanding with him that day.

"I am really doing three men's work," said Don Federico again, as he began making preparations for his trip. "They probably think they are getting the best of me down there at San Juan, but they're mistaken. They can't give me too much of this work."

The boy who had brought the morning's mail had gone off for Don Federico's horse and seeing that he

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was already back and waiting for him Don Federico, hurriedly slipped on his leggings, and grabbed one of the saddles from the floor.

"Don't hesitate about going to the hotel for your meals, now," he said, going out. "They have to be paid for anyway."

"I'll lock the door," said Carl nervously, "and stay out all day."

"Why?" asked Don Federico, stopping half way down the stairs.

"I'd rather."

"No, no. Do what you like there. There isn't a thing in the whole house that I'm afraid to lose. You better lock the door from the inside and go to sleep. By the way, if you should want to shave, you will find a razor in the drawer of my wash stand."

Mounting his horse, Don Federico bade him make himself comfortable, and rode away. Carl walked back slowly as if in a dream, and stopped on the porch near the doorway to gaze over the valley and the hills. A feeling of emptiness possessed him and he wished Don Federico had not been obliged to go away.

"I never saw such a man," he said to himself, and returned to the front room. Like a flash came the idea that by fixing the whole place up he would please him. Locking the door, he pulled off his shirt, and began to work with delight. He washed the dishes and put them away. He found the pail in the kitchen and getting water, a rag, a scrubbing brush and a cake of soap, he proceeded to scrub the floors.

He scrubbed the floors and scrubbed the woodwork. Then he took the saddle and straps that he had been moving about from corner to corner as he worked, and, nailing a board to a beam in one of the unoccupied rooms, carefully hung it up upon it. He arranged orderly all papers and books on the desk

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and dusted and cleaned every bit of furniture in the room. He dusted and cleaned the glass and frames of the pictures on the walls and hung them straight. In the bedroom he put a number of nails into the wall and hung up Don Federico's clothes that were scattered all over the room.

At two o'clock he went into the little kitchen, built a fire in the queer concrete stove-like affair and heated his coffee, then sat down to eat his lunch, to hope and build plans.

As he sat there eating and looking out into the yard he conceived the idea of turning the wooden boxes into shelves for Don Federico's books, and diminishing the time he had given himself for his lunch, he went out and began to work. By four o'clock in the afternoon he had two long shelves made and had some two hundred of Don Federico's books orderly arranged on them. Then he swept all evidences of his work from the room, swept the cement part of the yard and swept the porch and stairs.

"He won't recognize the place," he told himself and smiled, anxious to have Don Federico return and to enjoy his appreciation.

After looking about and finding a few more things to do, he decided to clean himself up. "They won't recognize me if I have a mustache, while a young fellow like me with a beard would look suspicious." He decided to shave his beard and leave his mustache. "If they come out here, lookin' for me, it's all up with me anyway."

He shaved his beard off, trimmed his mustache, combed himself carefully and after hesitating a few moments, took the poorest of Don Federico's shirts, dressed himself up, and went out upon the porch.

That vapory drowsiness that had been hanging over the village and the valley, had disappeared and

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all things were clear and bold, rich with the colors of late afternoon. Carl was sleepy. He went back into the reception room and sat down on the most comfortable of the rockers. The visible effects of his handiwork delighted him. He closed his eyes just to rest them but fell asleep.

He dreamed of New York. He entered his mother's home. Matilda sat pale and death-like in her dark kitchen and knitted baby moccasins. She paid no attention to him. She went on knitting. Was she angry at him? He spoke to her. She did not answer. His heart ached. He had hoped that *she* wouldn't turn against him. Suddenly she began to fade. He called to her again. She returned. She clasped her bloodless hands as if in despair, and the tears streamed down her sallow cheeks. She closed her eyelids tightly and begged fervently. What was she begging? What did she want? His heart pained dreadfully. He grew impatient and demanded her to speak louder so he could hear. Suddenly he realized that he hadn't uttered a sound. He couldn't speak. He had lost the power of speech. His lips moved uselessly. He became desperate. He tried to move towards her but his feet would not go. His brain, strained by agony, burst. From the chaos that followed came the sound of a sweet instrument. Such music he had never heard before. It came from the distance with a shaft of beautiful light. The light lit up his mother's face. She was smiling, she was begging, or was she singing? Was that her voice?

Something happened. The light died out. The face disappeared. He looked about, rubbed his eyes. The music was still playing. He rose from the rocker and hurried to the side window. On a corner in the distance he saw a small Porto Rican band, playing. There was a flute player there, a man playing a horn

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and a boy drumming on some kind of a peculiar drum. The flute was heard sweetly above all the other sounds.

Twilight was descending upon Humacao. Evening was enriching the lovely little village with ineffable beauty; but thoughts of evening began to harry him. The dream face of his mother added to his discomfort and, closing up the windows and doors, he fled from the darkening, silent old house to the plaza.

The street lights were lit. Some of Humacao's neatly dressed population came out upon the plaza for a walk. The storekeepers closed up their stores and the cafetina keepers lit up their cafés. He was hungry but did not want to go to the hotel for his meal. He decided to go into a café and get a cup of coffee and some crackers. He came to the most brilliantly lighted of these, which like most all the stores in Humacao consisted of three walls. The fourth side, the side facing the street consisted of two or more heavy pillars and between the pillars wooden curtains, like the roll top of a desk were pulled down when the place was to be closed, though most of them were never closed.

Within, the walls and partitions were made of concrete and washed white, looking very much like the interior walls of prisons or old forts. The floors were concrete floors and the tables and chairs were made of twisted steel, the tables having marble tops.

He sat down at one of these little tables in a secluded corner and for fifteen minutes tried to get the neatly groomed respectful waiter to understand what he wanted. The waiter understood the coffee part of the order but crackers was a word he had never heard of. He went out and a few minutes later came back with a plate on which was a whole loaf of the Porto Rican rolled bread and set it down as if it were exactly

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what Carl had ordered. The second time he came, the waiter brought with him a pitcher of hot milk and a small pot of very black coffee. He went out a third time and came back with a small plate on which was a bit of yellow canned Danish butter. Concluding that he had cleverly guessed the Americano's wants, the waiter respectfully bowed again, and left him to himself.

It was the most delicious coffee Carl had ever tasted and later he ordered some more, and as he sat there he scrutinized carefully every one that entered. Without an exception, every Porto Rican that came in bowed to him, and every bow gave him strength.

Upon the plaza, after his modest repast, he paraded about as all the other people who were there did. From everywhere and to everywhere poured streams and currents of color, light and sound. At one place a phonograph was playing, somewhere else some one was singing, and in the city hall the band was practicing for the Sunday night concerts.

The American young women teachers accompanied by the American young man and a Porto Rican young man, all richly dressed and very happy saying amusing things and laughing at them, came from behind and passed him. The sound of English startled him. He saw them walking ahead of him and their indifference hurt him. He envied them with all his soul. Why had nobody ever really cared for his companionship as he had craved for the companionship of others? He left the plaza.

He walked the road and the streets between the plaza and Don Federico's a countless number of times, passing barefoot country folks in parties on their way home from the village. The sky above was cloudless and studded with stars that seemed to him to be bigger and brighter than the stars of the north. From

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the road he saw the valley lit up by fireflies and on the hills red star-like lights crept through the atmosphere, telling stories about the huts they illumined.

At seven o'clock, Don Federico appeared on foot, carrying his saddle on his arms. At the hotel, he had got a boy to take his horse to the pasture.

"Hello. That you?" he said seeing Carl near the gate of the old Spanish house. "Why didn't you go to the hotel for your meals?"

"Oh, I didn't care to. I wasn't hungry."

"You weren't hungry? I ordered something to eat for both of us and expect Justo to bring it in a few minutes. You have to eat to live, you know."

Don Federico walked up the stairs looking about him as if he sensed the change that had come over his home. Carl helped him carry the saddle. When they reached the reception room Don Federico wanted to drop the saddle, but Carl held on and carried it into the other room where the other one was hanging. Don Federico lit the lamp. There issued from it an unusual flood of light, and he saw at once that Mr. Rivers had been very busy. He stopped and stared about the room as if he were not quite certain whether he was actually seeing things or merely dreaming, his sleepy face, smiling with admiration.

"How would you like to keep the job steadily?" he asked, dropping into his desk chair and throwing his hat off towards the side.

Carl merely smiled. He didn't know whether Don Federico was joking or whether he really meant it.

It occurred to Don Federico that he had committed a breach of behavior by throwing his hat aside as he used to do and rising lazily, he picked it up and went into the bedroom to hang it up and to change clothes.

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"It feels good to have the house like this," he said coming back to his desk.

Carl rocked himself gently in the rocker and closed his eyes, centering his thoughts upon the pictures the afternoon dream had left in his mind. Don Federico read his letters. He came to one that especially interested him and reading it twice began to smile. Without turning his head or taking the cigar from his mouth he went on telling Carl all about it. Hearing no response from Carl he turned about to look at him and seeing his eyes closed, he asked, "Asleep?"

The word asleep, startled Carl. He opened his eyes wide as if he really had been asleep.

"I was saying," went on Don Federico, "I've got to go away again early tomorrow morning, and I may have to be away till the following night or the day after that. The department wants me to act as General Superintendent and examine two schools where there had been a considerable amount of trouble."

Carl sat up and, involuntarily, his face assumed an expression of alarm. He did not like the idea of staying in the old house a whole night alone.

"They want me to have a talk with Mr. Bolder an American Supervising Principal, who now holds the job I had when I first got here. He hates the peons, why should they like him? I knew that Bolder would not get along there as soon as I saw him."

"You go to-morrow?" asked Carl.

"Would you like to come along?"

"Sure. How do you go?"

"Horse back."

"Where'll I get a horse?"

"I have two of them."

"Gee! I guess I would like to go along."

"Great people there," went on Don Federico. "No

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reason whatever for his not getting along with them. It is the most secluded spot in Porto Rico. Very beautiful though. Great people! They used to bring me butter, cheese, eggs, berries, and straw hats. By the way, you can have a nice straw hat if you want it. I have a trunk full of them. You can have one of my canvas riding suits, too, if you want it."

They were interrupted by the appearance of Justo carrying a basket on his head, containing the food Senora Martinez had sent.

"Is this Justo?" whispered Carl at sight of the crippled, distorted and deformed idiot whom he had met at the hotel at his first appearance in Humacao.

"Yes, this is Justo," said Don Federico, and asked the strange creature, in Spanish, to shake hands with the "señor."

Justo hobbled over to where Carl stood and pulled off his sombrero, revealing a closely clipped, nut shaped pate, grinned horribly, showing his fangs and struggled with great effort to perform the operation of shaking hands. Once he got hold of Carl's hand he was reluctant about letting it go. But worse than all, Justo attempted to speak, and desiring to have the "señor" near him he didn't seem to be able to get close enough to his face, to Carl's unbearable discomfort. The poor disinherited animal went into convulsions every time he uttered a word and in spite of the hardship he experienced in his talking or groaning, like which it sounded most, he persisted in telling his story and asking his questions without the slightest regard for Don Federico's informing him that the "señor" could not speak Spanish.

At last, to Carl's relief, he bowed and grinned and began to hobble off swinging the entire trunk of his body as he went. A thought entered his undeveloped brain and he stationed himself in the doorway and

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remained standing there blushing like a child, glancing furtively and often at Don Federico, till the latter saw him and gave him the pennies he wanted.

"Poor devil," said Don Federico referring to him when they were seated in the little kitchen with the food spread on the concrete stove. "I feel very sorry for him. Everybody abuses him. Señora Martinez works him to death and gives him rice and beans twice a day."

After supper, Carl refused to allow Don Federico to help him clean up, insisting that he desired to earn his bread.

"If you insist, go ahead," said Don Federico, "I've got to answer a few letters."

Carl was afraid of the semi-darkness of the little kitchen and every once in a while the great fear would come upon him with a shock that he'd feel in every part of his body, yet something of hope was creeping into his fearful existence. Don Federico, was a funny man, most exasperating in some of his peculiar habits, but a superman, a creature to whose care some god had directed him. When through with his work Carl went into the reception room very quietly and moving his rocker to the window, sat down. Don Federico was busily writing.

A young man came in, took off his hat, bowed to Carl and sat down in one of the chairs. He was followed a moment or two later by another young man who pulled his hat off, bowed to Carl as the first had done, and without uttering a sound, seated himself on another chair. Another young man followed, and still another and then a number of boys came in. The boys headed straight for one of the rooms that Carl had been cleaning and he was inclined to drive them out, but fearing to displease Don Federico, he kept his seat.

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Through with his writing, Don Federico rose, bowed to his visitors and walking over to where his phonograph stood placed a record upon it and began one of the very usual concerts.

Carl did not admire the whole matter so very much. He didn't quite see why a man should thus throw open his house to anybody that happened along, and concluded that Don Federico was a very eccentric fellow. "No one but a freak would leave a tramp in his house alone all day." He thought of the two dollar bill and the handful of coins that he had found in a pocket in one of the pairs of trousers which he had hung up. It never occurred to him that he hadn't touched a penny of that money just because he had been left that way.

Carl turned and looked out upon the porch. A crowd, mostly of women, had silently gathered there. Some were seated on the stairs, some on the floor and others stood near the gate.

He rose and walked out. He found an unoccupied window sill in the shadow and there sat down, his head lowered, staring and listening yet hearing and seeing little or nothing. In that way he sat for a long time. The phonograph played on and led him about in the realms of his memory. His motionlessness had stiffened his limbs, and he got up to stretch, perceiving for the first time that the porch and stairs were deserted. Had he been in a fit? He trembled with fear and alarm, and rushed into the reception room. The phonograph had ceased some time ago and Don Federico sat in his chair asleep.

Carl awoke him. They closed the shutters and doors and retired. For some time Carl found it impossible to sleep. He worried about the "fit" he had got into and warned himself not to allow it to take possession of him again. He reasoned the thing out

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carefully while Don Federico slept, and as he reasoned he fell asleep, exhausted.

CHAPTER IV.

When Carl opened his eyes next morning, he heard Don Federico already stirring about in the reception room, making preparations for the journey. He could have slept a long time yet. It was very early and every cell in his body craved the continuance of rest, which he hadn't had for so long a time; but a vague childish fear that Don Federico might go off without him, sent him out of bed and he dressed hurriedly. He thought painfully of the times when he was obliged to get up early on cold winter mornings and of the time when Mr. Diedrow, the country boarding house keeper, would bang on the door at four o'clock in the morning.

He sat a moment with his feet on the floor, rubbing his neck when he perceived the canvas suit, a shirt, and a hat on the lower end of his cot. He gazed at the clothes and smiled. With the exception of his mother, people had never done such things for him before. He could not understand Don Federico.

After eating the breakfast which Justo had brought, Don Federico sent two boys for his horses and when they came, saddled them. Don Federico instructed Carl upon the manner in which Porto Rican horses had to be handled, and since Carl had acquired no habits of riding, having never been on a horse in his life before, and since he was very desirous of learning to ride, he learned very quickly.

They passed the plaza and Carl thought that everybody in the town was there to greet them. It occurred to him that he had never seen any one pass

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Don Federico yet, without greeting him. And the thought that Don Federico's head went bobbing up and down all the time, struck him as very funny. He bowed, too, as Don Federico did, feeling very big on the little bay horse and trying hard to play his part well.

They passed out of the little town and Carl faced the open road with great joy. The further they went the more joyful he became and found it hard to keep his face straight. The desire to smile with the joy of it all was so great, he was obliged to keep his horse behind that of his companion so that Don Federico should not see him. The road fell away down a valley and their horses started upon a trot. The trotting was a little too much for him and he was glad to get to the end of the incline, but he hoped to have more of it so as to become an accomplished rider.

They went along quietly for a while, passing many huts, road-side stores, children playing, women washing clothes and singing, riders seated on the wicker baskets saddled to small horses and donkeys, then came to a level stretch of road. Carl quietly urged his horse on and it started upon a gallop and Don Federico's horse galloped immediately behind him. It was a most exciting experience. Carl was obliged to hold on tightly, but never in his life had he enjoyed anything so satisfying. It was as if all the yearning for activity throughout his childhood, youth and early manhood, had found satisfaction for the first time, and when the road began to fall away again, and the horse stopped galloping, he was sorry. How great such a life would be he told himself, if he did not have to worry as he did. But after all, he went on in his attempt to encourage the hope that this bit of excitement had inspired, this is, as the sailors had said, a God forsaken place. If they haven't thought

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of my getting away on the schooner by this time, they never will. He considered himself lucky, after all. Not a soul knew of his get away. He was safe. He would work with Don Federico. The man was an "easy mark." He would beg Don Federico to keep him and let him work for him, and he would get Don Federico to teach him. He would study hard and make something of himself. He would change himself unrecognizably, mentally as well as physically. Some day, when he had money and had grown much older, perhaps he would steal back to New York and locate his mother and George. He felt very bad over thoughts of George, but he would not allow himself to think of him as being caught. George was clever. George would find some way of evading "them."

They climbed a very steep hill, going up till they could look over the entire extensive valley and see the great ridge holding up the sky in the west. The road went down again a short distance and plunged right into a creek. The horses were as anxious to get to the water as he was and started to trot again. They walked right into the stream, fearlessly when they got to it, and stopped in the middle of it for a drink, stretching their long necks and nozzles as far away from their feet as they could. Carl envied them. He would have liked to jump into the water and wash away the something that persisted in clinging to him, however hopefully he dreamed. The stream ran rapidly, and he felt himself sailing away in the opposite direction. The horses lifted their heads, the water dripping from their nozzles, and began splashing their way out to the other side, and Carl continued smiling involuntarily with the ever-increasing joy of his experience.

On the other side of the creek where the elements had torn the earth raw till it showed reddish brown

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like a wound, the road started up a very steep incline and continued going up in a crooked line for a long time. The horses strained all their muscles to make it and Carl hung on tight, sensing the peril of the path and enjoying it immensely. After more than half an hour's dangerous climb they reached a very long narrow ridge, a mountain wall, from which they could look in all directions to the extremities of the earth. Both slopes of the ridge, way down into the valleys, were studded with great gray crags. The beautiful gray of the crags was touched with a purple shimmer and patches of dark green moss.

"I've been in a great many parts of the earth," said Don Federico, who was somewhat ahead of his companion and had turned backward in his saddle, "but I have yet to find a path anywhere that is half so beautiful as this." He faced front again and went on talking. "It is like looking down upon the earth from another planet. See the huts scattered over the valleys. See the village way down there. Don't they look like playthings?"

Carl tried very hard to answer appropriately, but his words seemed to have made no impression upon Don Federico, as if he had not heard them at all. Hurt by Don Federico's silence he spurred on his horse till he was directly behind him and began again.

"Do you think there are people in the stars?" he asked.

It took Don Federico a long time to reply to this question and Carl worried lest he might have made a mistake again, but in his usual drawl, making it seem as if he were talking to himself, Don Federico finally answered.

"There is no doubt in my mind at all that there is a kind of man or animal on every other planet. We are a conceited lot to think that of all the millions of

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planets as large as and larger than ours, this is the only one to carry animal life. When you look into the telescope you see the shining little dot turn into a round illumined sphere like a baseball and larger, you're apt to believe that the star you are seeing is a world or a sun with other worlds about it. I'll never forget the first time I looked through a telescope. I was out walking one evening on Broadway in New York. I came upon Fourteenth Street, I think it was Fourteenth Street and saw a telescope fixed to a tripod and an old gray haired professor looking into it. I joined the crowd of spectators, found that you could look through it for ten cents, and immediately offered my dime. The professor pointed to a star, called it Saturn and told me to look for the colored rings around it. You know, I looked at that star and laughed. I really think I had doubted that I would see anything different from what I saw with my naked eye. But when I saw that wonderfully beautiful, illumined ball with colored rings crossing it—well, I just laughed. I didn't know what else to do with myself."

"Is there such a machine in this place?"

"I have a small one myself, somewhere among my belongings."

"Gee" cried Carl for want of a better exclamation, "I'd like to look at them planets. If people there could look at us, if they had very large machines, they could see us as small as little bugs, wouldn't they?"

"If they have no stronger machines than we have, they can't see us at all—we're too small. They can posibly see our mountains though."

"Can we see their mountains?"

"Yes, when we have a good moon-light night, I'll fix up my telescope and let you see the mountain peaks on the moon."

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Carl's interest was intense. He imagined himself a scholar possessing all that knowledge and the two of them rode on over the ridge in silence. Suddenly his thoughts having come upon a wall that was very hard to scale he asked again, with a little hesitation, "What happens to us when we kick the bucket?"

"I'm afraid I couldn't tell you that," said Don Federico, "some people think they know, but they're only guessing. I am sure though that wherever we may go, if we go anywhere, we will be better off than most of us are here."

"Is there such a thing as hell that some people talk about?"

"No! I think that the only hells in the universe are those that exist in the minds of the people that tell you about them. I'ts just a 'Boogy-man' story to frighten naughty children—and it's just as pernicious, too."

"Isn't there lots of people that would always be doing wrong if they wasn't afraid of hell?"

"I don't think a single man or woman was ever kept from doing wrong by the threat of hell or by any other threat. I know that all that has ever been accomplished by the 'hell' story has been to make the poor devil who has committed some wrong for which half the time he is not to blame squirm and suffer, fearing hell. We do things we have to do or want to do and if they are wrong we suffer, fearing hell afterwards."

"That's right, all right. I know it's right. It's always been that way with me."

"We have plenty of hell, right here on earth. It's this hell that makes us do wrong things. The hell life we have to lead drives us into doing wrong. From the cradle to the grave we are always wanting

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things we can't get, always quarreling and fighting with each other."

Carl was sure that Don Federico was talking to himself—so sure that he didn't even make an attempt to answer him or to express himself. That he was talking *of* himself, he surely did not know.

"No, my friend," Don Federico continued in the same monotone. "There is no hell save the one we have been running so devilishly well down here. We torture and torment each other with fire and brimstone. Our homes are hells and our occupations most of them are shoveling coal. Our streets are hells filled with devils, and some of the devils are very respectable storekeepers on those streets, and those devils are white men, black men, yellow men, young men and old men, and they all dig their forks into the bodies of white men, black men, yellow men, young men, old men and children. Our factories and shops are hells. As if we haven't hell enough, the church promises us more of it when we're through here."

Carl agreed with what he said, with as much of it as he understood or thought he understood; but he did not know how to tell him that he agreed with him, and just said nothing, hoping that Don Federico would go on talking, for this notion of hell was as new and inspiring an experience as was horse-back riding, and his soul laughed for joy of it.

"We all do wrong. Every one of us. If this sad world of ours had ever carried a single saint, there would have been no hells on this earth, and there would have been no need of conjuring up more hells when these exhausted themselves. 'He that is without sin among you let him cast the first stone.' Even Jesus himself considered himself not free from sin, even he claimed no right to throw stones. You've read that, haven't you?"

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"I don't know as I ever did," said Carl sheepishly. "It's darn good, though."

"You have heard of Christ, haven't you?"

"Oh, sure," said Carl innocently.

"Well, a lot of those dear good folks who love to tell about hell were very anxious to get the chance to murder a woman one day because they said she committed adultery. They wanted the joy of stoning her to death because she had committed a crime, which was, by the way, very much like what they themselves had been doing all along in various forms and to various degrees. They brought the poor woman before Christ to get his permission to stone her. He said to them: 'He that is without sin among you, let him cast the first stone.' Of course, they all took themselves away as fast as they knew how, and then Christ said to her: 'Hath no man condemned thee?' and she answered: 'No.' Then he said to her: 'Neither do I condemn thee; go and sin no more.' Every one of us reads that over and over and repeats that word for word. We have repeated that so often, have become so used to it, we don't stop to think what that means any more. We are all sinful. We all do wrong, and those of us who are reeking with sin are the first to throw stones."

"I want to read all that," muttered Carl, the tears coming to his eyes. "You got it?"

"Yes, sure," said Don Federico, and smiled.

They came upon an elevation about which were many hills topped like arrows with jagged, pointed rocks. Before them the path ran up a very steep incline and the horses, straining every muscle, struggled upward while their riders clung to them with all their strength. The path became more hazardous. The hill became more steep and swelled out into a round, dome-shaped summit. The horses strained

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and puffed till with one great effort they made the top.

The valley below had sunk down much deeper than it had been and before them were still other hills or mountains. When the path they were on turned abruptly about a cluster of shrubbery, they found themselves in the yard of a mountain store, and dismounted.

It was already noon, and they were very hungry. In the doorway of that most remarkable store, a low, hut-like building, with a tin roof, stood the proprietor, holding a naked, black baby in his arms. He seemed very glad to see Don Federico, and shook hands with him warmly. Don Federico said something to him in Spanish and he called for his wife, who came to relieve him of the cunning little baby, while he went off to bring something for his visitors. The mountaineer's wife was as black as her baby, very poorly dressed, but smiling as if the visit of these two Americanos was a joyful thing to her. The storekeeper came back with two huge cocoanuts, and getting his macheti, he deftly made a hole in each and handed them to his visitors, delighted with the avidity with which they drank.

Both men walked into the little store, consisting of a narrow little room with many empty shelves and a few loaded ones, with some empty boxes and one partially filled one, with two empty barrels and one half-filled with potatoes. On one of the shelves they found a spherical Hollandaise cheese, on another shelf they found some bread and in one of the boxes there were a few crackers. Making half a dozen cheese sandwiches, they devoured them right there, and then filled their pockets with all the crackers in the box. Don Federico paid for it all, and mounting their horses, they rode on. Carl jumped upon his

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horse like an experienced rider, and followed Don Federico, smiling like a happy child.

After ascending and descending a number of rolling hills, and crossing a number of descending streams, they could have been seen from the valleys below, climbing the highest hill they had yet climbed, looking like flies on a great rough wall. The ascent was greater, but more gradual. They were ascending to a higher country, more lonely, more remote and more beautiful. A basin-like country with more desolate, gray crags and as hospitably a kind of people as ever breathed. Reaching the highest point, they looked down in the shallow bowl and in its center they saw a small rickety building standing on many wooden legs, its tin roof reflecting the sky like the gray crags about it. Somewhat above that roof, the stars and stripes waved gently in the lonely breeze. Toward the right climbing half way up the side of the bowl was a cluster of white spots—two small tin-roofed houses, a thatch-roofed barn and a thatch-roofed shed, being merely a thatch roof supported by four crooked stilts.

They turned towards the right and within a very few minutes they were climbing over into the yard of the Porto Rican farmer, whose tin roofs had shone a beautiful light gray among the somewhat duller gray crags. A barefoot woman was gathering fagots when they arrived, and dropping those she had picked, went forward to greet Don Federico, who had dismounted, and bid him tie the horses under the shed. She then called to a man who was doing something on the other side of the house. He too came forward with smiling face and greeted Don Federico as if he had been hoping for his coming, then welcomed them into the house. There they found, in a rather elevated room with naked beams, weather stained, another

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woman, who shook hands with both of them, nervously brushed back her hair and disappeared. The farmer put up two canvas hammocks in the doorway, and asking them to make themselves comfortable, went out. A young dark-skinned boy, grinning bashfully, appeared with bowl and water, and handing them to Don Federico, was about to run back, but Don Federico put his arms around his shoulders, patted him a bit, asked him about school, then dropping a few coins into the boy's trouser pocket, he let him go.

They washed themselves and stretched out in the hammocks.

The breeze came in from the mountain peaks laden with aroma, and about the little hut so high in the air, the spirit of solitude whispered in resting, soothing sounds. Carl lay there swinging gently and thinking. It was all so strange to him. How remote the place was. It was in another world. Oh, that the phantoms of the old world would find no path across the pathless desolate sea. He thought of home again, sighed unconsciously, and swung more rapidly. He saw himself a shadowy figure running breathlessly over the vast distances, and saw that which he had escaped from enveloped in darkness and gloom. Near him lay Don Federico, smoking a cigar and thinking. His interest in the stray-dog boy had been intense from the very first. By the first gruesome night, that interest had been intensified, and yet was constantly growing in intensity. He had taken a fancy to him. He drew inspiration from his youth and what seemed to him a struggle from the horrible bottom for the heights. Carl's morose introspectiveness was like his own youthful introspectiveness. It was as if he beheld his own youth, still struggling to reach, and he hoped to help him reach. There were evidences of richness in the queer boy's nature, richness greater than the

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poverty that was only too evident. He desired to cultivate that richness, to enjoy the cultivation and the fruit.

They were called to the table. Don Federico rose first and glanced at Carl furtively in calling him, and it seemed to Don Federico that he had been praying, his cheeks were flushed, his eyes gave slight evidences of tears and were downcast.

The hospitable farmer had had some berries picked and a huge bowl of them stood on the clumsy table like a sun in the midst of the other inviting dishes. They sat down on the home-made, wooden bench, and ate ravenously, rice, beans, eggs and cooked, fried and raw bananas. Then they were given coffee—coffee that only Porto Ricans can make.

They were through with their meal in a very short time, though they ate as much as they could, and started down the side of the great green-gray bowl towards the little school-house, the shanty on legs with the flag floating above it. Don Federico carried the cardboard box which Carl had seen tied to his saddle.

He walked rapidly, as if he were very anxious to get into the little school-house, and Carl followed him. Immediately, upon sight of him, the entire class rose to its feet and the dark-skinned teacher smiled his welcome with evident sincerity.

Looking about in the lonely valley, one could see but few huts, and yet, the little school-house was packed to its limits, and the eager faces were stamped by the poverty and oppression that had drained the blood and vitality of generation after generation of their ancestors and that had driven them up to the lonely, almost barren, hilltops. It was a peculiar looking class room. There were young men and young women and babies of four. There were black and

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white and every shade between. Upon every decaying wall were to be seen evidences of the hunger that had brought the eager faces to school. The teacher, a very dark-skinned individual of medium height, with a sad, struggling face, stood there proffering the little wisdom he had gathered with so much effort, proffering that little wisdom with a conscientiousness that better trained and better paid teachers seldom evince.

To Carl the school was *funny*. The ridiculous building, the ridiculous arrangement and combination of the pupils, and the *ridiculous* looking pedagogue provoked a desire in him to laugh right out, but he kept his face straight. Funnier still were the greeting these big and little pupils extended Don Federico.

One negro boy rose in his seat and with a amusing expression on his face, amusing because of its extreme seriousness, walked up to Don Federico and shook hands with him. The boy's neighbor, a tall girl, with tan face, immense hair ribbons, and a very short dress, walked up to Don Federico and as the boy had done, shook hands with him. Realizing that each of the seventy pupils in that little room would follow the example thus set before them, Don Federico rose, and walking through the aisles, shook hands with each and every pupil, with the four-year-old babies as well as with the young men and women, and as he walked his face was radiant as if he were shaking hands with celebrities, with kings and queens. It was very funny to Carl, and he put all that down in his secret registry as evidences of the man's freakishness. He considered him a freak and kept constantly gathering these evidences, examining and re-examining them, yet all these registrations and examinations were done with a half-heartedness, as if there was a great element in his nature that objected to them, that ob-

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jected to all that offered anything against Don Federico, and this objection was growing stronger; yet, had George been with him and offered a word of ridicule, Carl might have rolled with laughter.

One little fellow alone sat idle. Carl's eyes fell upon him. He kept looking at him. His interest in the youngster at first was due to the little fellow's large eyes which rolled comically every now and then. Then he began to see more than the funny eyes, and before very long he read in that little fellow the history of his own boyhood. Memories of sitting in cramped seats, memories of desires to be out and about, memories of great indefinite dreams came back to him. He stared at him, stared till the pupils of his eyes dilated, till all things before him were flooded away and the little Porto Rican became the pale-faced little Carl in his desk in the school-house on the triangular space near the Hudson River. Jimmie's face and Minnie's face flashed into the illumined hazy circle and a great painful longing possessed him. He sat up in his chair and breathed deeply, looked about the room and tried to interest himself in what was going on so as to avoid falling into the thoughts that he feared were coming again. But before long he singled the youngster out again and stared at him till once more his eyes dilated and again the ghosts of his past came back to haunt him. And this time they reached much more readily the inevitable point of his life's story, the point to which by some strange evil power he was always drawn. He saw George. He saw him arrested and saw them electrocuting him and he fought against his imagination with such ardor that it took him out of his seat off towards the illumined circle as if there he hoped to meet him. No one saw the expression of agony on his face when he arose—it was done so quickly. The little fellow had seen him

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coming and had straightened himself hastily and had riveted his big eyes upon the book on his desk. A feeling as of having done wrong came over Carl, then his good sense got the better of that feeling. He looked down at the youngster and smiled and the youngster who had been alarmed and had looked furtively at him, smiled back. Carl then returned to his chair and noting Don Federico's face, saw that he was pleased with his apparent interest in the boy. Carl trembled and tried to control himself. He felt as if he had barely escaped getting into trouble.

School was dismissed and every child was asked to get on line, out doors. Don Federico then brought out the large cardboard box that he had brought with him, took off the cover, poured a great many of the candy balls, which the box contained, into it, and giving it to Carl, asked him to begin at one end of the line and pass the candy to each pupil, while he began at the other end. Every pupil helped him or herself modestly to one of the balls and all remained on line till every one had been attended to, then the line broke and the whole class gathered about Don Federico and shook hands with him again. When the pupils all in turn came to Carl and shook hands with him, he responded with sincerity and the desire to laugh was never more remote from him.

Within a few minutes the lonely crags were alive with children, moving specks of color — white and black. When they started for the farm house, Carl saw some gray crags grow purple and some grow blue, and as the twilight deepened and they neared the farm house, all of the crags were blue.

"What do you think of my *kids?*" asked Don Federico.

"Why do they stay in school so late?" asked Carl,

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feeling that the smile he had offered Don Federico was reply enough.

"This is the third class he has taught to-day. He's a good teacher, very conscientious young man. Think of it, he was a little fellow going to school when I first came here. All the youngsters I liked so much then, have grown into young men and women. Some have died! Some have gone to the States. Some are among Porto Rico's statesemen now. Time and change are as busy here as everywhere. See those gray crags! Did you see how the sunset lit them up? See how cold and blue they are now. Those crags themselves keep changing every moment, changing and wearing away as surely as we change and wear away."

"Yah," commented Carl with a sigh. "What y' goin' t' do about it?"

"Nothing, except to try to live each day, each moment. Stop looking back and hoping for the future. Get what you can out of every day. Get all you can out of the mountains, the woods, the stars, sunsets on the crags, the lonely crags themselves, and the people. They have a great deal to offer. Find out what that is and take and give. Love children and be like them. Live, live, live! Get something out or life or fight to get it—it belongs to you—it is your heritage. All things pass away and waiting is losing. Patience is not a virtue, it is stupidity."

They reached the farm house. Don Federico declared it unnecessary for Carl to help him with the horses as the boy would probably refuse to let either of them take care of them. Carl obediently turned towards the house, but changed his mind as soon as he got to the doorway. He went back. Not far from where he heard Don Federico talking to the boy, was a huge rock at the edge of the hill, at the

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edge of the great bowl. Here he sat down and gazed off into the rapidly darkening valley with its manifold shapes and forms blending into shapelessness. Peepers were peeping, stars were twinkling, great fireflies flashed in among the leaves of the trees, around them, above them and in the valley below. He folded his arms and half shut his eyes. He remembered the third night after his escape from the reformatory with George. He saw with his mind's eye himself sitting on the edge of the creek, with George at his side. They were waiting until it got dark enough so they could steal up to the shed stuffed with hay and go to sleep. He had been sleepy then. He remembered one moment when he had been afraid of the dark, yet had felt safe because he had George at his side. He felt George at his side now and looked around, trembling as he did so, as if he actually expected *George* to be sitting near him, then rose and hurried over to where Don Federico was still talking to the boy.

After supper, neighboring peons came to see Don Federico and gathered about him a few yards from the doorway. Among them were young men and young women, who as children remembered having taken from many a box that he had passed around, the candy they used to like so much. They were all delighted to see Don Federico and the hilltop echoed with the sounds of their laughter and the noisy questions that succeeded each other in rapid succession.

The woman of the house placed a lamp in the doorway above where Carl sat and the light fell in an ellipse upon the noisy gathering, and he gazed into the circle of light upon the beautifully illumined faces like one gazing into another world. Out of the mass of faces, his mind soon dissociated one face, clear. Opposite Don Federico, gazing intently at him, stood a

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girl with reddish brown hair, her arm about the waist of a companion girl. Her complexion was of the purest white, a whiteness intensified by the darker complexions about her and by the pale light of the lamp. He wondered why he hadn't noticed that face first, and as he gazed, still wondering, he kept seeing more and more in it. Suddenly she turned a bit and he saw her profile. It was Minnie's profile. He smiled. The similarity was remarkable. He half shut his eyes and Minnie was clearly before him, standing there with all the charms that haunted his memory. He stepped off from his seat on the door sill and made his way over to the crowd, feigning interest in what Don Federico was saying, gazing intently upon him and stealing furtive glances at her. He moved towards her little by little. Still looking at Don Federico, he was soon near enough to touch her. He half closed his eyes and tried to make himself feel that he was really standing next to Minnie, and soon succeeded so well that he began to fear doing some ridiculous thing, and walked away, carrying in his mind the first impression and feeding his soul upon it. He went down the bowl edge a bit and not far from the crowd sat down upon a rock, wet with the rich dew of Porto Rico, played with his imagination, aided, abetted and illumined by the large tropical fire-flies.

The voices died down and the peepers and toads regained the atmosphere to themselves. Carl jumped up suddenly and saw Don Federico walk towards the house still talking to the last of his visitors, an old, round-shouldered man with a stick.

They slept in the hammocks that night. They lay there in the open doorway, and Don Federico's voice could have been heard in a sleepy monotone answering the questions Carl put to him.

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"Yes, I knew her father. He was a red-headed Irishman, an expert engineer. He married a Porto Rican girl, the woman who served us with coffee this evening, and had a beautiful home not far from here, near one of the large sugar mills. He got sick and bought this farm where he hoped to get well. Here he lived a few years and died. The girl's mother, uncle and aunt now run the farm."

Don Federico's voice became so low that Carl decided to ask no more questions. Soon Don Federico was asleep and Carl still wide awake, was happy to think that he did not have the slightest bit of fear for the night. He lay a long time dwelling on the profile still illumined in his mind, then fell asleep.

At midnight they were awakened by an explosive burst of thunder that shook the hills and rumbled through the valley, and found the rain beating in upon them. They jumped to their feet and hurried about the room, closing up every opening. Over that part of the house was a tin roof and the rain beat down upon it with maddening rapidity. Lightning flashes, lasting a minute, breaking through the openings in the shutters, and ending with a terrifying crash of thunder that sounded as if every tree in the neighborhood had been struck and had snapped, followed each other in rapid succession, growing more terrible as the storm raged, till it seemed the world was coming to an end. It seemed but another moment when the raging fury would tear the roof off or send the hut rolling down into the valley like a thistle. But just as suddenly as the storm had begun, it ceased. Immediately upon its retreat the peepers were out happier and more energetic than ever, filling the hilltop with their music and contentment.

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CHAPTER V.

All of the next day they spent in riding over the hills, going from school to school. Towards evening, very tired and hungry, they arrived at the home of Mr. Bolder, the supervising principal of that district, and were invited to stay for supper.

Mr. Bolder was most glad to see them, it being so long, he said, since he had seen an American face and had heard spoken a real good English. He threw himself into his desk chair and leaning back as far as he could go, clasped his hands back of his head and delivered himself of reminiscences of life in New Jersey, where he had been so happy. As soon as Don Federico was able to, he discouraged the flow of reminiscences by bringing the discontented principal down to the school business, for which the department had sent him to see Mr. Bolder and the schools under his supervision.

When they were through with their work, Mr. Bolder turned to Carl, who seemed to have been a more sympathetic listener than Don Federico had been, and promising him some real American tea, as if there were such a thing, and real American this, that and the other thing, asked them to follow him into the dining room.

Poor Mrs. Bolder! Porto Rico did not agree with her at all. This information she offered as soon as the men had seated themselves about her scrupulously clean and neatly set table. She, too, was neat and scrupulously clean—rather tall and thin. She was also dispeptically inclined, an inclination she was sure she hadn't brought with her from New Jersey. She had a dispeptic stare, a dispeptic complexion, and a dispeptic demeanor. Throughout the meal-time Mr.

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and Mrs. Bolder tried hard to make their guests think that they got along beautifully together by making use of the most affectionate terms of address, yet at every turn showed that they quarreled and bickered over everything. Their only agreement lay in their complaints about Porto Rico and in the repeated offer of their wishes that they were where good Americans ought to be, spending the whole of the hour in more reminiscences, in which Carl, in a general sense, joined in, while Don Federico remained silent. In the hope of once more changing the subject, Don Federico questioned the supervising principal again about his teachers and pupils and Mr. Bolder once more launched into a tirade against Porto Rican teachers and Porto Rican children, comparing them with those of the States and calling upon Carl to witness the truth of what he said.

After supper they sat for a while smoking in the office, then the two of them departed.

What disturbed Carl a great deal was that Don Federico seemed to be angry with him.

They left the road some distance out of town and began climbing a steep hill.

"You'd think that Porto Rico would perish without them," began Don Federico suddenly, when they reached a level stretch on the other side of that hill, "or that the Porto Ricans wouldn't let them go back, the way they talk. He's been here nearly as long as I have and ever since I know him he's been grumbling about the place. You couldn't get him out of here! When I met him again some three years ago, he told me that this was the first position he ever had that gave him a chance to save. He saves nearly everything he earns and intends to go back to his home in New Jersey to spend it there. All of us who come here do that. At home we complain about the Italian

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because he comes to the United States to save up some money, with the express intention of going back to Italy to spend it."

"That's so, too," said Carl.

"Yes, that's what you said about Bolder's kicking," retorted Don Federico impatiently.

"Well," stammered Carl, ashamed and somewhat nonplussed, "I just wanted to jolly them along. I'm mighty glad I'm here. I ain't had much of a time in the States, and as far as the people go, I ain't got no kick comin'. If I had a job here, I'd be mighty glad, I tell you."

"I had half a mind to tell him plainly that he was lying," continued Don Federico. "He was a country school teacher, getting eight dollars a week, in New Jersey. Here he gets annually twelve hundred dollars, his rent and light and two hundred dollars for his horse. He doesn't want to go back. If the Department discharged him to-morrow he would go about weeping because he lost his job. But the thing that makes me angry is that he despises the Porto Ricans, but is quite willing to take their money; and I know that the only reason that he has for hating these simple, lovely people is that they don't happen to be Americans. He'd feel just that way if he were in France or Germany or England. He is one of those Americans who consider themselves a race apart from and superior to all other people and the only reason they feel that way is that they are so stupidly ignorant themselves."

They reached another steep incline. The night had lowered over the barren hills and had awakened the toads and peepers. The three quarter moon was cut in the clear sky and a spirit of lonely beauty pervaded the world. Faintly in the night distance were black

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blue ridges and down in the valley were silk-gauzy mists.

They reached the farm belonging to the red-headed Irishman's widow and her brother who was near the little shed when they approached. The good man pleaded with them to stay over night, but they refused, Don Federico claiming to have important business in Humacao on the morrow. He succeeded, however, in getting them inside for a cup of Porto Rican coffee.

On their way out again to where their horses were, Carl saw the widow's daughter who had learned of their arrival and had hurriedly dressed herself as she had been dressed the night before. Before mounting Don Federico shook each member of the household by the hand and Carl followed his example most willingly. The faint lamp light burning in the midst of the room did not reach her out doors, but he found his way to her and shook her hand with much feeling and it seemed to him that as much as one can respond in a hand shake, she responded and he turned to his horse with the hope that he would meet her again soon. He was alone in this world if ever there was a soul in it that was alone. He did not mind the solitude at all and felt sure that he could spend the rest of his life on that beautiful hilltop. He turned once in his saddle and in the flood of moonlight he saw the profile again —it was the last time he saw it.

Don Federico's horse fairly ran down the extremely steep hill almost breaking its neck. Carl held on tightly to his and when they reached the level ridge, Carl was a great distance behind Don Federico and both he and Don Federico were glad of it. Don Federico had started off on a line of thought to which he could have no companion, and Carl desired no companion in the thought that seethed in his mind. Pura,

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he had heard her mother call her. She had worn a neat little dress and the extravagant ribbons in her hair added much to her angelic face, in Carl's eyes.

The night was so beautiful! The fire-flies flashed with brilliant peacefulness, the peepers peeped wildly, and the gauzy atmosphere was touched here and there by distant sounds—Don Federico's horse beat a rhythmic tread in the warm quiet distance. Cloud-like thoughts sailed swiftly over the dome of Carl's dream world, driven by winds of hope. He thought of different excuses he might offer for wanting to come back this way. He would ask Don Federico to let him have a horse and start very early some morning, tell him he was going to look for work, and make for these hills, inquiring about work as he went. Here he could live for the rest of his life undisturbed. Why should he care about New York? He had never been happy there anyway. The very best time he had ever had, had been anything but a real good time. He thought of the week following his release from the reformatory, when he lived with George and Alice and Maggie. He recollected the awful feeling of satiation when that week had ended. He thought of his last meeting with Alice and the manner in which she abused him. He was beginning to like the lonliness of Porto Rico and Don Federico had taught him to like the Porto Ricans. The hill was a lonely place, true enough, but he could live on that farm and work and grow older and *change* just as the Irishman had done.

These thoughts he dwelt upon from every possible angle ceasing his reverie only when the hoof beats of Don Federico's horse, sounded too faintly, or when the peacefulness of the night forced him to look about and to smile. "Oh, if they only leave me alone!"

The road fell away down into the hollow and his

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horse took it into its head to run a bit and so he came quite close to Don Federico again. Don Federico had tired thinking and had begun to whistle. The melody he whistled bore no name with it, in Carl's mind. He could not have said whether he had heard it before or not, though the pictures it brought to his mind were many and familiar. He did not know how long or how short it was, whether it ended and Don Federico was repeating it or whether it was endlessly continuous. It was a part of the warm Porto Rican, dream-like night. When Don Federico ceased whistling, Carl wished him to go on again and experienced a desire to whistle it himself, fragments of the melody clinging to the walls of his memory and to the moonlight hills and hollows.

They came to another level ridge and the two horses followed each other closely. They saw a black object in the distance on the bare hill ridge surface, its queer shape cut out upon the sky behind it. Both watched it—Carl with anxiety. When at last it neared them it was another proof to Carl that his anxiety was groundless and another proof to Don Federico that all human kind were alike creatures of feeling, of sorrow, of toil, of infinite hope and of transitory joy.

A peon was seated barefooted, on a loaded donkey and his litle son lay asleep before him. Like shadows the two parties passed each other. Don Federico's voice sounded a soft good evening, and the peon responded and then the tread of his horse's hoofs beat way into the black rear, growing fainter and finally inaudible.

"Beautiful!" said Don Federico.

"That's what it is," said Carl.

"Does it make any difference in the night, whether the peon is a peon or an American, or an old knight, or a king with his little prince, or whether the animal he rides is a donkey or a noble steed? Would a

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noble idler with ostrich feathers in his hat and a sword at his side have looked better on the hilltop against the sky?"

"Not a bit," said Carl with confidence.

"A son of toil. What simple, what kindly bearing! There are no widows because of his avarice. He eats what he earns and gives what he cannot eat to whoever comes along and asks for it. His race runs as peacefully and as harmlessly as the shallow little creek that plays away over the stones near his hut. He lives the quiet peaceful life of his donkey—that's the only kind of life—all the rest is existence in various degrees of feverishness. I never see these fellows but I wish I had been born among them. What has my life been? I look over the whole succession of days and crave to wander over again the old roads, yet I know that if I went back to my home, if I went back to New York I should be very unhappy and uncomfortable. How I'd long for this? Things are just as they were in New York. I see that by the letters I get. The struggles I had!"

"Your people in New York?"

"New York State. Up in the Catskills. I have only a mother and brother. We never had much to do with any of our relatives—many of them I have never seen. First I wore my youth away by incessant toiling on the farm which paid some man interest. Worked myself half to death on that farm. Poor Will! But it was infinitely worse in New York. As I look back I just shudder to think of the utter emptiness of that existence. So much misery around me too. It seemed after awhile as if every cripple, every exhausted pessimist came to me for help. It nearly drove me crazy, and God knows I wanted to be of service to my fellow men. Things came to a point

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where I simply could not bear it any longer. I was on the verge of losing my mind."

Don Federico stopped suddenly, turned about and saw Carl immediately behind him.

"What in the world started me off in this way?"

"The peon and his son," Carl answered in a whisper as if he felt that he had been intruding upon the man's secret expression, and by the silence that followed he knew that he had been intruding. Then for awhile the steady rhythmic hoof beats of their horses on the beautiful craggy ridge, spoke for them. They rode on slowly, wrapped in the semi-darkness of the moon-lit night and in the silence of a world asleep.

It seemed to Carl that Don Federico was asleep on his horse. He gazed ahead of him, constantly, as if he feared he might fall from his horse. Suddenly Don Federico began to speak again as if he had not broken his former even flow of words.

"And what a time afterwards! New Orleans! That wretched dirty hole of perdition! But they're all alike. What city hasn't it's black holes, its squirmy worm-like populace. Unhappy Cuba—the smell of it is still in my nostrils."

They came to a very raw earth incline and Carl knew that soon they would reach the creek. In the middle of the creek the horses stopped to drink again but they drank very little. Swinging their long necks they started on an animated pace, as if from there they knew their way and realized that they were going home.

After having gone down a deep valley they began to climb up again and soon came to a high level plateau-like stretch of ground with an unfrequented grass o'er grown road. The road turned, went down another hill, ran past a peon's hut and into a well built road in a more habitable part of the island where the

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toil of many hands had supplanted acres of wilderness with fields of tobacco and sugar cane. In a valley towards their left they beheld a vast tobacco field covered with cheese cloth showing gauzy white in the moonlight like a great mist of peace rising imperceptibly to heaven.

They passed many huts by the road side and came upon a hacienda, a great sugar mill. It was lit up by a thousand reddish lights. Great wheels groaned and hummed. A thousand men and boys flew about the great noisy ant hill and pulled and tugged and drew and cut. Thus the one time, lazy, contented peons of the hills, worked through their nights and slept their days away, serving the advent of "civilization." As if the days were not enough for grinding, they ground their nights away too, making their days and nights and weeks and years bitter that distant men might make their coffee sweet.

Half an hour later they came to a little country store. Two peons on loaded horses, on their way to the market, conversing in low monotone had reached it but a moment before they did. They were barefooted and wore suits of light colored material, and large straw sombreros. When Don Federico entered, they greeted him and stepped aside to allow him to reach the counter. Carl stood in the doorway and gazed with great interest, an interest which to him was a new experience. The night ride, the night itself, the passing shadows, these toiling beings coming from somewhere and going somewhere, groping in the darkness, each individual going his own way; these sensations, these visions, these floating disconnected ideas, were the elements of life about which he had never done much thinking, but which he was beginning to understand.

Eating the cheese sandwiches and olives which Don

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Federico brought out with him, they stood near their horses silently and sleepily, then mounted them again and rode off.

Dawn was breaking over the distant hills when they came upon the little cemetery near Humacao, passed it in silence, turned into the main road and thence into the slum section of the town. The rickety shanties that formed the streets, like great dry goods boxes with their lids on were lightless and silent within.

A sleepy policeman in the middle of the street saluted them and returning his salute they passed him, saluting a second policeman further on and then came upon the plaza, upon whose benches miserable, homeless little boot-blacks were sleeping.

The sound of their horses' hoofs woke one of these little fellows up. That sound meant business to him. He sat up instantly and looked about himself. Recognizing Don Federico, he stole down from his bench softly so as not to awake any of his competitors.

The two men dismounted and unsaddled their horses and the youngster who had his box of polishing materials secured to his shoulders jumped on one of the horses and hanging on to the rope around the neck of the other rode off to pasture, dangling his bare legs with glee, having begun his day so auspiciously.

Carl could hardly stand on his feet. He was so sleepy it was hard for him to keep his eyes open. The saddle was very heavy and before they were half way home, his shoulders began to ache severely. Finally they arrived home and dropped their saddles on the floor of the empty room with great relief. He was so sleepy he could hardly undress, and just as he got into bed a strange thought entered his half numb brain. It came in the form of a question. "Is death like this? Does one lie down so happily—weary tired, desiring

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rest?" He heard Don Federico say something about sleeping as long as he wished to, but he heard no more. He cared no more what was said or done. He cared no more what happened. The waves were big and all-powerful, soft and warm and soothing. He gave himself up to them, stretched out his limbs and willingly sank.

CHAPTER VI.

When Carl awoke early in the afternoon, he was still being carried about by the waves. It was a sea of variegated sensations in which he found himself and the dominant wave was the flute-player's melody. It was golden-lighted afternoon. The sky was clear and deep blue. The trade winds hummed peacefully as if the earth had been heaven and tears were but dew-drops. The flute he was beginning to know, the flute that filled the world with music every afternoon, was clearing things up for him. It lifted him out of the sea and into the sunshine. Yes, he was safe in Porto Rico, near the beautiful valley and the hilltops and there was hope for him.

He sat up in his bed and listened. The flute-player came to a sudden end. The little band went off to play at some other corner, to interest other people in the moving-picture show to take place in the evening, and the sad, childish cry of a little candy vender took up the strain and moved on down the street with his little coffin-like box of "dulce" on his head. The little singing voice grew fainter and its dying notes were taken up by a vender of ice-cream, singing,—all Porto Rican venders sing,—in melancholy sounds, of the good qualities of his "Montiquilla."

Don Federico's bed was unoccupied. Regretting that he had slept so long, Carl dressed hurriedly and

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went to Don Federico's office or reception room, and there found him hard at work.

"Well, how do you feel now?" asked Don Federico putting down his pen and taking a cigar and lighting it.

"I feel fine in every way but one," said Carl.

"What's the one?"

Carl sat down into one of the rockers, attempted to speak, but hesitated

"You are decided to stay in Porto Rico?"

"Well, I'll tell you," began Carl, squirming nervously, "I will not go back to the States, if I can help it. I never got along there. I'm always in trouble there. I don't want to go back unless I have to, and I'm not going back unless I can't get anything to do here. Everybody treats you rotten there. Here everybody treats you decently. I've had more respect since I'm here than I got in my whole life in the States. A man's respected here no matter what he is, there you ain't respected unless you got money or education."

"Well, I told you that if you care to stay here and work with me you can," said Don Federico, examining his cigar. "Of course there's no outlook for you in this kind of work. You don't want to go on cooking for me and taking care of my house all your life."

"I'd like to do that for awhile anyway, if I could," said Carl looking anxiously into his face, "then, don't you know, while I do this I could try to find a job."

"How far did you go to school?"

"I hate to tell you. I was no good when I was a kid. I didn't want to study. I was a fool then, but I know better now."

"The school system!" said Don Federico, puffing away at his cigar. "Many children are discouraged and stupified, who would otherwise be capable and do very well. Why don't you study now?"

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I'd be only too glad to get an education if I knew how. I know what it means now, all right."

"There's no reason why you shouldn't be able to get an education. If you were willing to study very hard you could in a year or two pass the examination for a teacher's certificate and teach here. The Department accepts a lot of lazy fellows who come over here to make a few dollars. I don't see why you shouldn't be able to do better than that crowd if you like children as I think you do. If I thought you felt like Bolder I'd advise you to go back to the States."

"I guess I don't feel like Bolder. I never had people treat me so nice as these people do. People in New York look down on me and, well, it's rotten there. I like these people, every one of them. Not a fellow passes by me but bows an' is nice. I never got such treatment in New York. You feel like bein' nice to such people."

"Then you ought to do very well here."

"It'll take me years and years, won't it?"

"Look here," cried Don Federico emphatically, "Abraham Lincoln had less schooling than you did. He learned to write on a wooden shovel. You know the stories. If he could become President of the United States and such a President, why can't you study hard enough to pass a simple examination. Of course you've got to be willing to work."

"By golly, here's my hand," cried Carl beside himself with enthusiasm. "I'll work, I'll work like a horse, if you only tell me how."

"I'll be glad to help you all I can. I have here all the books you need and if you should need others we can get them. You said you can cook, and if you are willing to do the cooking and to keep the place in order, I don't need it always as carefully fixed up as

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you had it the other day, I'll pay you five dollars a month."

"I'm satisfied I don't have to spend any money here."

"No, you can use some of my clothes. I have plenty of them, and if you want a Sunday suit, you can get it."

They arranged all details and then Don Federico claiming to have some important bit of work to finish, Carl went into the kitchen.

When things there were ready for supper making, he went to get supplies at the grocery store on the plaza, and all the way he smiled, for the hopeful thoughts that surged through his brain made it hard for him to keep his face straight. Nothing better could have happened to him. He had come upon the right place and the right man, the best man in the world. He would never forget him he promised himself and hoped for the opportunity to befriend him in turn some day. "Suppose I become a teacher or a supervising principal and people like me as they like him, they'd surely take my part if they tried *to do that* to me. They'd stand by me. Besides they wouldn't give me the chair if I was educated anyway. You don't hear much of educated fellows going to the chair. It's usually some poor bum of a devil."

He was himself surprised at the new feelings that he felt towards the little bootblacks who rushed at him with cries of "zapato." He found them irresistable. They eyed his smiling face distrustfully awhile, then deciding that he was another edition of Don Federico, they clung to him, taking licenses they would not have taken otherwise. Selecting the weakest little fellow among them, Carl engaged him and sat down on one of the plaza benches. As soon as the selection was made the other little blacks withdrew at once and ran

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off in divers directions playing "hoople" and watching for business. The little fellow polishing his shoes was a very clever youngster and Carl enjoyed watching him. First he hastily daubed one shoe then rang a little bell which had come from an old bicycle and which he had ingeniously attached to his box. The ringing of the bell meant that Carl should place his other shoe upon the box. He worked very energetically, rubbing the shoes and watching out for additional business, yelling "zapato" at every passerby, seeing three cents in every pair of shoes. Carl gave him a nickle and that night every bootblack in Humacao knew it.

In the grocery store, the clerks treated him with utmost respect.

He bought his supplies and started back with them, coming upon Justo, who wobbled up to him and, grunting pleadingly, grabbed Carl's packages from him. Carl looked at the distorted clownish face with its idiotic expression and found that it was not near so repulsive to him as it had been when he first had seen it. He willingly gave him his packages and laughed looking at him as he wobbled hastily before him. There were other things he wanted to buy, so he let Justo go on and returned to the store to get them.

Don Federico was delighted with his supper that night, and said that the Porto Rican way of preparing food was the only thing about Porto Rico that he couldn't get to like very much.

After supper Carl washed the dishes and whistled as he washed them. He thought of the horror he used to have for wet dishes, saw himself standing with other boys at the reformatory and digging his hands into the revolting sloppy water and touching the disgusting wash rags, and recollected the feelings of despair that would come over him at the thought of being

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forced to do those things however much he hated to do them. He compared the feelings that tore at him those days and the feelings he experienced then and from that comparison deducted a number of theories of life which were useful to him in his determined and desperate struggle out of "Hell."

He took great delight in examining all his work. Everything had been cleaned and put away in its proper place and the floor had been carefully swept. He stood looking about the room with satisfaction when he heard a gruesome sound as of some one weeping, and hurried into the office. There he found Justo, leaning against the wall, his hat off, his clothes crumpled and torn, his tough-skinned feet wriggling, and his ugly face distorted into a most ludicrous expression of grief.

Don Federico tried to talk to him, but under no circumstances would he cease his moaning or utter a word. Carl was seized with a desire to laugh, but the serious expression on Don Federico's face dispelled that desire, and he stood there looking at the creature and trying hard to be sorry for it. Don Federico got up from his seat and, walking to him, gave him a nickle. Justo then stopped moaning and by the time Don Federico was back at his seat Justo was gone.

"Something's the matter with the poor devil," he said sitting down. "They don't treat him right at all there. Señora Martinez works him to death and gives him little or nothing for it. The poor creature is always hungry. People think he was made to amuse them. By the way what has happened to my boys? You haven't driven them out, have you?"

"Oh, no," Carl said. "They haven't appeared at all."

"I guess they are afraid of the cleanliness," said Don Federico, laughing, and returned to his work.

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When the crowd began to gather for the evening concert, Don Federico asked Carl to play the phonograph while he went on with his work.

The concert lasted an hour. The auditors came one by one and went one by one, and Carl felt real important as he stood near the machine and bowed to whoever came in or whoever got up to go. At the end of that time, Don Federico was still at work. Carl closed the machine and went out upon the porch. He stood there gazing over the black silhouettes of the palm leaves and towards the vague outlines of the hills, when suddenly he heard a sound as of some one snoring. Carl was afraid and hurried into the office to tell Don Federico. Taking the lamp they went to investigate.

In the empty room where Carl had attempted to sleep the first night of his arrival, with his head on a saddle that he had taken down from where it hung, lay Justo, asleep.

"I know what he wants now," said Don Federico, looking at the living heap on the floor, "he wants to leave the hotel, and I'm going to keep him, if I have to fight for him. He's human even though he is an idiot. All he wants is a shirt, an old pair of pants, a nine-cent sombrero and his meals, and he'll help you a great deal so you can devote most of your time to studying."

CHAPTER VII.

The pineapples began filling the air about the plantations with an intoxicating sweetness and street venders filled the village air with the songs of their praise. The mango, the pride of the Island, acquired rosy cheeks and made the Porto Rican's days gladsome. Young men and young women sat in the elevated

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sidewalks, on street crossings and loaded the spring nights with their singing.

Days and days passed by, became weeks and months. Carl studied and learned, and saw the world as he had never seen it before, as one sees the landscape from a flying train. He had fixed up his study room so that it was a haven of comfort. An open side door and two windows admitted the trade winds. The house was kept scrupulously clean and orderly and no boy could now be seen rushing right into the place as they used to do. On rainy days the little Porto Ricans could have been seen rubbing their hard soles on the rag on the porch till they were sure they were clean before making their way in carefully. Don Federico himself insisted that he had by contagion regotten a great deal of his energy and was doing much more work and attributed his desire to work to Carl's keeping himself busy near him and to the added comfort of his room.

Back of the cement-floored yard was an unused piece of land, a one-time garden neglected and overgrown with decaying, ugly weeds. Carl gathered the many boys that used to sit around in Don Federico's kitchen, playing the awful instruments and telling stories, some of which were of doubtful character, and with their help cleaned the weeds off, and dug the land for growing vegetables. Every boy was a gardener. With the help of Don Federico and the directions on the packages of seeds, Carl soon had a garden that was the talk of the village. School teachers came to visit it and spoke of it to their classes.

Justo supplied it with water when that was necessary. Poor ugly Justo worshipped Carl and Carl in turn began to like him. Carl never ceased thinking over that and often told himself, "We can really begin to like anybody after we get used to them. When we

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hate people it's because we don't know them." Justo slept on a cot in the room where Carl had been afraid to sleep, and with Justo sleeping there he was not afraid. Justo did everything that Carl asked of him, anything that he could possibly do and in his anxiety to do whatever Carl asked of him, he became a much more capable being. Carl liked to please him. He bought for him the gayest colored buttons and Justo was beside himself for joy. He rigged out a complete outfit for him, not excluding an old pair of shoes, and on Sunday evenings on the gaily lighted plaza, when the musicians in their white linen suits played concerts for the benefit of the citizens of Humacao, who paraded around the plaza dressed in their very best, Justo was among them and the proudest of them all.

When in the afternoon or evenings, Carl desired to go out for long horseback rides, and Don Federico was not home, Justo was master of the house, seating himself on the porch, allowing no boys to come near it, and sending all visitors away with what information he saw fit to stutter to them.

On these long rides to the ocean over the road which he never would forget, the road over which he had come to all this happiness, Carl did the greatest amount of his thinking. Here he repeated those passages in his readings which he wished to show Don Federico he had learned by heart. Here he would whistle the melodies he heard on the phonograph and loved, and as he would whistle them with great emotion he would feel just as he felt when in Don Federico's office he would press his ears against the wooden horn to miss no part of the beloved sounds and feel the vibrations down to his heart. And here too, above all, he would dismiss the fears that, in spite of all his happiness, in spite of all his reasoning, in spite of the constant and great changes that kept taking place with-

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in him, came prowling back, like vipers stealing into a nest, and bit and dug and wounded. He found a spot on the sea shore near Humacao Playa, the port of Humacao, from where he could gaze o'er the vast ocean over which the schooner had brought him, and would seek to drown those fears in the soul-stirring waves, in their bottomless green depths. Leaving the ocean on his way back he would look towards El Yunque as it towered above all the hills and its peak pierced the frown-like clouds, and would draw hope from it, as if he felt that in a last resort he could fly to that peak and lose himself in those dark clouds.

Sometimes he would meet the two American girl teachers and they would ride out much further with him than they would have gone had they been alone, and because they made use of his company they showed themselves glad to have him with them. He was extremely happy when he was with them on the road, and infinitely sad when, after the ride at night, he lay in his hammock or on his bed and talked the matter over with himself. That they were nice to him as soon as and as long as they could make use of him did not concern him. The kindly treatment they showed him when he wore the right kind of clothes and kept himself clean shaven and neat, treatment which he had never got in his old world, which made him conscious of being in a new world, was what he valued, was what helped him grow with a rapidity that compensated for the slowness of growth that had left him stunted.

Everything that grew in him had commenced growing suddenly, at least his becoming conscious of that growth had been sudden, and the knowledge and the love of things he had acquired, he dated from certain days and moments that remained clear in his memory. For instance he never forgot his first coming upon a

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deep love of music. He had heard many times a rich cello solo on the phonograph without its having made any kind of an impression on him. One day, when Don Federico was away, he had tired of diagraming some twenty complex sentences, and had gone to the phonograph. Carelessly selecting a record at random, he had placed it upon the machine without looking for its title, and had hurried to the desk chair into which he had fallen with a thud. He had begun thinking of New York and had forgotten all about his record, hardly hearing a sound of the playing that filled the room, when just as he thought of Jimmie and Minnie as he had seen them the last time, the cello sighed and the sigh went down to his heart. He rose and walked to the phonograph wondering why he had never heard it that way. He replayed it. It sounded even more beautiful the second time, and he played it again and, as if he wasn't near enough to it, he placed his ear tight against the wooden horn. All his sorrows, all his longings seemed to have been recorded in that record and he felt the sympathy of something bigger even than Don Federico, a sympathy that he seemed to be assured he would never be ashamed of, a sympathy that came from the vastness of the universe with all its many worlds. He played it again and again, and as he played the shadows lengthened. The sun lowered and sank beyond the western ridge, and all the gold and grandeur, the silence and sweetness of Porto Rico's evenings, was baked into the music that flooded his consciousness.

From that time on the phonograph was always playing, and the cello solo, soon had to be replaced. Carl sent for the new record, paying for it himself.

His life was rich, as rich as it had been poor. He studied with a willingness that made failure impossible. He studied the elementary school work and it took

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him just about one month to learn what in his school days they wished him to learn in a term and that he had twice in that time failed to learn. The problems that had in his childhood, with the conditions that obtained in that night-like period, seemed utterly incomprehensible, seemed so much simpler to his maturer mind, and every step of progress in his work was a source of new joy, added strength, and intensified enthusiasm.

Next to his phonograph, and afternoon flute player, and his rides to the ocean, he loved the things he read. Every meal-time was an hour of discussion and often it meant an hour of discussion after meal-times, during dish washing and cleaning up. Don Federico loved to talk with him about the things he had him read. He went over these stories, most of which he had read in his youth, with the emotions of a gray-haired man who sees and touches the relics of his childhood, and Carl profited by that emotion, acquired one of his own and read and read and read. In these discussions Don Federico invariably brought out some point that Carl had failed to grasp, some beauty that he had failed to appreciate, and Carl marveled at the sagacity of his teacher and strove to emulate him, often stopping over a given passage and re-reading it a dozen times to make sure that in their discussions later, he would be able to show Don Federico that he had thoroughly understood what he had read.

They took many rides together and sometimes went for long walks in the evenings. Several times a week they would go to the moving-picture shows where, in the poverty-stricken opera house with its many kerosene lamps and its few electric lights, they sat in what the opera manager delighted in calling a box. The boxes were slightly elevated above the orchestra seats, the seats on the level floor, and beyond boxes and or-

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chestra, against the three walls was an inclined affair that resembled a chicken roost. which was called the "gallery." At moving-picture performances the box seats cost twenty-five cents apiece, and when an Italian opera company came to the town, the same seats were sold for two dollars, and Humacao had many people who were willing to pay that much. In these boxes they would sit for hours listening to the music of that band, sad as all Porto Rican music is, and would gaze longingly at the scenes taken in the States and in other parts of the world. Always when the "Buenos Noches" (good night) flashed on the screen and sent them home, they would walk all the way to the cafe on the plaza without uttering a sound, saddened by the recollections that the different scenes had brought with them. At the café, they would drink their coffee and try to liven up a bit, but always they would repair to their beds to spend the night wading through the pictures that continuously flashed on the screen in their minds.

Carl loved to go to the plaza on Sunday nights. The little park then was always brilliantly lighted by the lamps between trees and by the happy faces of the population of Humacao. There was such a gayety and contentment about these people parading slowly on the wide cement walk on the perimeter of the square. A concrete fence-like structure that lined the perimeter, provided seats along the four sides and the spacious walk.

One Sunday evening Don Federico expressed the desire to stay home and wanted to know why Carl did not go there himself, when the latter tried to persuade him to go. Finally submitting, Carl did go himself. He selected a corner and sat down under the branches of a tree, through which a street light poured its radiance. He sat there musing to himself and watching

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the many people who passed before him, many of whom greeted him when they first saw him. He was amused by the appearance on the walk of two tiny little girls, who, aping their parents, strolled along after them, arm in arm. He started to follow them, when he almost collided with the three American teachers who had come along behind them.

"What makes you keep to yourself?" asked one of the girls.

He tried to offer some excuse, and mechanically walked along with them and in the shuffle managed to save himself the trouble of answering her. When out riding with the girls alone, he felt better. He sensed the young man's dislike of him and tried to avoid having anything to do with him.

Miss Carter, the young lady who had spoken to him, suggested that the four of them go for a walk into the moon-lit country.

"You know what the people here think of young ladies that go out at night with young men," cautioned Mr. Lehan.

"I don't care what they think," said Miss Carter. "I want to go for a walk, don't you, Newlly?"

"I don't know that I don't care what they think," said Miss Newhall, "but I do know that I'd like to go for a walk."

They decided to go and, leaving the band players to play their music standing in their white linen suits on the music pavilion, they took the road in the direction of El Yunque, the solemn sentinel of the Island.

Carl walked with Miss Carter and Mr. Lehan and his companion were some distance ahead of them. Carl put on the breaks as it were. He made it his business then as always, to say as little as possible and to ask as many questions as he could. Miss Carter, who liked to talk very much, was glad to take ad-

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vantage of the opportunity thus offered her, to express herself.

Suddenly, after having turned about a hill, they saw in the distance ahead of them another hill all ablaze. Some one had set fire to the sugar cane, and the hill looked like a volcano in eruption. Their curiosity got the best of them and they hurried towards the fascinating light.

The more the host of peons struggled to put it out, the more the blaze spread. The flames rose into the sky, and lit it red, and like a great beacon, it illumined the thatch roofs of a small village on the hill slope. The inhabitants of the village fearing for their homes were all out fighting the flames with bags and water.

Carl, Mr. Lehan and the girls moved up as closely to it as they dared, and stood fascinated by the spectacle. The flames spread and a hut at the ragged end of the village caught fire and went up like a paper box. A number of women began to cry and scream and the thing assumed something more than the mere spectacular. The four on-lookers began to retreat slowly. It seemed as if the whole world would be consumed in the great conflagration. Miss Carter held tightly to Carl's bare arm with her own soft warm arm. The touch of the arm and the silk gauzy scarf she wore, intoxicated him. He had a vague, sad wish that the lovely flames he saw tearing to the sky might painlessly envelope them and in this lovely moment consume them all, and cleanse his heart of the burden that nothing seemed able to remove. Another hut caught fire. He felt her tight against him—her soft, warm body, her beautiful clothes, the perfume about her. "Oh, God," he cried within himself, "if only they leave me alone—if only I had had this chance before."

It was very late at night when he reached home. Don Federico was still up smoking in his desk chair.

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Carl was bubbling over with emotion. He told him all about the fire in the strongest words he could muster. When through, it seemed to him that Don Federico was not sufficiently excited. Then he began to feel as if he had not told enough. He wished he could tell all. He wished he could tell Don Federico, tell some one, how lovely Miss Carter had been to him. But he feared Don Federico would think it rediculous and laugh at him. Don Federico couldn't know that every corpuscle of blood in his veins, every tissue, every cell in his body had hungered for the touch of, the embrace of such a human being, that it had hungered madly throughout its night existence for this most wonderful of experiences. "What's the use!"

They talked awhile of other things. They talked of fires and the beauty of flames.

CHAPTER VIII.

Miss Carter! All week long he dreamed of her. The trade winds coming through the windows bore odors of burnt sugar-cane—urgent messages—and he found it hard to study. He knew she went for long walks. He had been told too that Mr. Lehan had to teach a class till half-past four in the evening, and that Miss Carter was through every day at two o'clock. Miss Carter always went off on the road to Humacao Playa and there on a little, rustic bridge on an odd-shaped concrete slab, under a cluster of bamboo, she would sit and read till Miss Newhall first, and Mr. Lehan later joined her.

Carl had studied very hard for months, but suddenly there came a blight upon his efforts For some time he had suffered daily headaches, and they grew more violent as he continued studying. At first he

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refused to consider them. He would go to his window, breathe deeply for a few minutes, then go back to his little table, sink into his chair and tell himself that his only salvation lay in the studying he did; but they began to come with greater violence. He would cease studying every few minutes and throw his head upon his arms and sink to the very depths of despair. He had allowed his skull to grow to maturity without exercising, and extending his brain. It was too late!

He went to the American doctor in Humacao and asked his advice. The doctor advised him to drop his studies at once, for awhile anyway, and he went home crushed.

The doctor had told him to remain out doors as much as he could and Don Federico urged him to take long walks. He took the long walks in the direction he had dreamed about, and he met Miss Carter as he had hoped. She was rather nice to him, but after a few meetings, he came to the conclusion that Miss Carter's intimacy that Sunday evening had been as exceptional as had been the circumstances, and he soon took to his study-room again, in spite of the doctor's injunctions.

He studied and progressed in spite of his headaches, and saw his life being changed as if it were a thing before him. He analyzed things that he had but reflexively responded to, and studied others that had never made the slightest impression upon him before.

Emotions that he laughed at in the days gone by, now stirred him to the depths. His heart went out to the shadowy being that was himself, plowing painfully through the years, running the gauntlet of society, and escaping wounded and half dead. But the wounds would heal! He would study, he would build the building of his soul till it towered above the city and commanded men's attention and admiration. The

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world would come to him and say, "Noble youth, the foundations you lay, we tore down. In spite of us you have built so grandly and so nobly. We fall upon our knees before you and beg for your forgiveness!" Poor deluded self-pitying youth! These are not men's ways! They build, they rear and they destroy. Their beautiful work rises to the skies, and they are building ever more grandly, but even as their castles rise, so rise their cannon. With the sound of their hammers giving heart and hope, are heard the merciless whizzing of the balls of destruction, the crumbling of the things they built, the dying groans of the builders.

There came upon Porto Rico, a new season. The clear, blue skies grew heavy with clouds and frowned perpetually. It rained and stormed at night and rained all day and again the next night. The storms kept him awake. The lightning flashes and the dreadful peals of thunder filled his soul with fear again. The streets were constantly running. His clothes were always wet. The food stuffs were damp and unappetizing. Everything stuck to everything else. Doors wouldn't shut or open and shutters stuck to window frames. If the sun came out at all it came for but a few moments and the heat it sent was greater than it had been and seared one's soul.

One afternoon Don Federico came home apparently excited, threw his bundle of books and papers on the desk, fell into his chair, and lighted his cigar.

"I have some good news for you," he said smiling, "you're going to have the house all to yourself."

"Why?"

"One of the General Superintendents is to go to the States for a month. He goes at the end of the week and they want me to take his place to-morrow, I must leave very early in the morning. That settles my vacation this year again."

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"I don't think that that's such very good news," said Carl and at the very first opportunity, he stole back into his room. He was seized with paroxysms of fear. He felt alone already. It was as if he had thought of Don Federico as a protector, one who would drive the blood hounds from his trail. Now he was alone, exposed. Should he tell Don Federico everything before he went? Don Federico would advise and help him. But no, how could he! Even Don Federico would be afraid of him. He shuddered with the thought of Don Federico's fear of him.

The sun came out later in the afternoon and brightened up everything in the little town. The flute player came to his post again, and when he went Carl was sorry. Once more the street venders began to sing in the streets, people showed themselves in crowds and seemed to be much happier. Carl consoled himself. Don Federico would soon be back. He would shut himself up and study very hard. He would read a great deal and take walks to the lonely hill tops. And—a happy thought came to him—he would go to the beautiful valley and the highest of the hill tops—the profile in the lamp light still haunted him.

But at supper time the awful feeling came back to him and he found it hard to talk to Don Federico, and at night he lay a long time before he fell asleep. Some time after midnight he was awakened by the thunderpeals of another storm. The crashes tore through the village and echoed from the hills, and the lightning lit up the room with terror. He rose from his bed, walked the floor and envied the sound sleeping Justo. When the storm settled down into a steady rain with muffled peals and fainter flashes, he returned to his cot and later fell asleep.

It was morning, when he woke again, but it was not light. The sky was heavy with black clouds and

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the rain beat down rapidly and steadily. A bitter little voice kept drumming into his ears, "Dawn will never rise again." He had told himself over and over again that they kill people just before dawn—streaks pierce the east, the sun struggles, tries to climb over—but never comes again.

He shook off his sticky, damp bed-sheet and without dressing lumbered into the room, where Don Federico had slept. He stepped into several streams of water that had made their way through openings in the doorway. The floor in Don Federico's room was full of streams. One of the shutters was open and it was raining right in upon his bed which was unoccupied. Don Federico had told him the night before that he was to leave early in the morning, and had arranged everything with him, giving him more than enough money for provisions, and all that he might need himself; yet, when he saw the unoccupied bed, he felt as if Don Federico had fled from him secretly.

It continued raining all morning and towards noon it cleared up a bit. Leaving Justo's food for him, and instructing the poor idiot in what he was to do, trying to make him understand that no one was to be admitted, he started out upon a horse-back ride.

As soon as he left the village and found himself upon the deserted road going towards the Port of Humacao and the sea, his spirits rose. He loved riding horse-back. The elevated position, the view over hills and fields made him happier and stronger. He urged his horse to gallop, and the galloping did his heavy heart good. The sun drank the water from the valleys and the hillsides in long straight vapory streaks from the earth to the rift it had broken in the clouds. The world was peaceful and his soul drew peace from it as the sun drew the moisture. He reassured himself of his security and rode on slowly, singing the songs

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the phonograph, the washwomen, and the afternoon flute-player had taught him. Before him on the right was El Yunque wrapped in heavier clouds, and towards the left he knew was the ocean over which he had come.

He encountered several pedestrians who greeted him amicably. They were Porto Ricans and he was not afraid of them. When he came upon the grove, where he remembered having bought two green cocoanuts immediately after his escape from the schooner, it began to rain again, but he was determined to get his good view of the sea and rode on, swearing at the weather. He came within a few rods of the Playa, the nearest he had yet dared go, and driving under the protection of a mango tree, looked out towards the sea, looked deep into the heaving bosom and the mists above it till it grew brighter once more. The sun broke another rift in the clouds and drank more water. The mists on the sea slowly lifted and he saw Santiago Key and beyond it, Vieques. Between the Key and the Port of Humacao, three great schooners were anchored, and fear seized him.

He turned his horse to the road and started back. He gave a last look at gloomy El Yunque, saw that another storm was coming and urged his horse into a gallop homeward. The storm overtook him and he galloped as it rained, till he came to a shed-like thing at the juncture of two roads and, riding under that, stood waiting for the violent rain-storm to subside. The rain continued, beating down unrestrainedly, the drops breaking upon the ground and bouncing back into the air in spray.

Down the road another traveler came. He had an umbrella over him and his horse was trotting, shaking it up and down. When the barefoot peon arrived, he greeted Carl and drove under the shed, beside him.

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The peon saw that Carl was an American and taking it for granted that he couldn't speak Spanish, did not open his mouth. Carl had no desire to speak. He sat there gazing out upon the falling flood and wondered, "What is going to become of me?" Fearing the thoughts he felt coming upon him, he looked up at the fellow's weather-beaten face, parched and sun-burned and a foolish little impulse seized him to fall upon this silent brother, this silent, sorrow-laden soul, boring its way through the great shadowy confusion, and beg for help. Carl saw a radiance in that ugly weather-beaten face. In the dark, glistening eyes, Carl thought he saw sadness and despair. Where was *he* going to? What was to become of *him?* Carl shuddered and grew sick at heart. Expecting the rain to keep on all day, he exchanged glances with the mysterious peon and touching his horse with his foot, he started off and away.

He rode on listlessly, allowing his horse to go as he pleased. The rain increased in strength and rapidity and went through his clothes, and he was obliged once more, to take shelter this time under a mango, but every leaf on the tree was wet, and deciding that he might as well ride on, he started off again, bending his back as he rode.

It was late in the afternoon when he neared Humacao, and met on the road, one of Humacao's High School pupils.

"Mr. Rivers," the student hailed him in broken English, shielding his face from the rain with his raincoat collar, "a man from New York, an Americano, is looking for you. He—"

Carl did not hear the rest. Hardly knowing what he was doing, Carl dismounted, led his horse under another roadside mango and sat down on the wet, muddy road bank, dizzy and confused, sat there for hours, till the wet ground made him unbearably un-

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comfortable and he rose like a man still asleep, remounted his horse, rode into the village, with the half-baked plan in his muddled brain, to ride out of the village again at the other end and make for the protection of the hills. People looking out of their doorways thought it queer that he rode so slowly in the rain, that his back was so horribly bent, and that water was dripping from him. He looked like a dead man.

In front of the hotel, a young man wearing a raincoat and holding an umbrella over his head, rushed out at him. One moment and Carl would have fallen over again into the bottomless abyss, but he saw the reddish face, smiling bitterly it seemed to him; and hating it, he stiffened himself. He would never give him the satisfaction of quaking before him.

"You're just the fellow I'm looking for," he heard.

"What do you want?" he demanded in reply.

The young man was taken aback by the unexpectedly unfriendly response; but being, by profession, one who had had it ground into his make-up never to allow himself to be conquered by unexpected or expected ill-humor, he merely smiled again, and tried once more. "I was informed in San Juan that Mr. Kaye, the Supervising principal here, is a mighty good fellow and that I shouldn't miss seeing him. My partner, who has been here many times before, told me that he always stayed with Mr. Kaye whenever he happened in Humacao."

"Who are you?" demanded Carl

The young man was amused "I am Theodore Lane, the famous bookseller. I have some dandy good books to sell, and am getting wet. If you don't mind, I'll follow you and we can talk it over at the house."

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CHAPTER IX.

Theodore Lane, the famous book-seller, with some of his dandy good books, in a lengthy discussion replete with insinuations showing that he was aware that Carl was an out-cast whom the mighty good fellow had taken into his house, exalted the virtue of doing unto others and so forth, and just as he sold his books, won his point; and, with the out-cast's unavoidable consent, established himself in one of the unoccupied rooms, like Poe's black raven above the doorway of Carl's new world.

They sat up till ten o'clock that night. Theodore Lane talked endlessly, questioning uselessly with a disgusting and terrible curiosity, waxing often into a most intense facetiousness; but when they retired Carl's heart was beating violently with a thousand new fears. He looked down almost appealingly upon the sleeping form of Justo, locked his door, shoved two chairs up against it, and spent his night in agony.

The bookseller slept very late next day, and when he awoke, he made himself quite at home, and began grilling his victim as soon as he showed himself. Theodore Lane, sensed something wrong in Carl's behavior and decided to find out what that was, keeping within the domains of a bookseller's etiquette, much as he could. By fearing him, Carl made himself so weak in the vampire's lusty eyes, that the bookseller hesitated never a minute in taking advantage of him. He talked constantly. He referred to New York whenever possible. He told all manner of things about himself, and constantly fired his arrow-like questions, till Carl lost his reason.

The day was bright and beautiful again, as if clouds had never darkened Porto Rico's blue. Early in the

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afternoon, Carl asked Mr. Lane whether he wasn't going out to sell any books at all, and stretching lazily, and yawning noisily, the bookseller replied that he intended to take it easy for awhile and that he expected his partner to come from San Juan that day or the next.

If there had been any doubt in Carl's mind as to Mr. Lane's being a New York City detective, sent after him, it was dispelled with that information. He managed to get away from the blood-hound, who already seemed to be licking his chops, without replying to his inquiries about his health. He was more weary now than he had been the night he came home from the beautiful valley, dragging the heavy saddle along the road from the plaza. He was more tired, more weary, and desired more ardently, the permanent sleep. He was willing now to die and end it all, but an ineffable longing to see his home, to see once more the streets at least, possessed him, and he decided to go back, before he was caught.

He sat at his table a long time musing over his books, habit telling him to study, and what was left of his reason sickening with the uselessness of studying. His headaches came with double strength. The rising feeling tugged away at his brain till he thought it would burst his skull.

He made his plans. He would go out for a walk in the evening and fail to return. He would make for San Juan as fast as he could and get the New York boat, which luckily left at five o'clock in the afternoon, next day.

He had not slept the previous night, and he was preparing to walk all of the coming night. He knew he needed sleep, and tried to stop thinking, but he couldn't though he was very sleepy and lived but half consciously. "Yes, it is the best thing I can do. I'll

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either get away with mother's and George's help—they may not have him—or else I'll kick the bucket myself. There's no use trying to hide. This thing'll hang over me as long as I live."

He threw his head down upon his folded arms. For awhile that position was restful, then it became uncomfortable, and in time, even painful. His head ached from bending and his thinking brought on a nervous twitching at the base of his skull, "just where the electric wire would be placed." His cheek bones ached where they rested upon his arms, and his arms ached from resting on the edge of the table, but he was afraid to lift his head for fear of the thought and the images of that wire. Finally finding it unbearable, he rose and stumbling towards the door, fell upon it with uplifted hands, in mute supplication. A wave of dizziness passed over him, and for a few minutes, he sank and whirled in space, then regaining his consciousness, he opened his door and made his way into Don Federico's study.

The book agent was seated in the desk chair with his muddy feet on the desk, reading a magazine. At Carl's appearance he dropped his feet to the floor, and spreading a sleepy smile over his face, wished to know, "Feeling any better?"

"Oh, I'm all right," said Carl impatiently, and went about setting things in order.

"You're a sick man," said Mr. Lane, gazing at him curiously, "what you need is a look at old New York."

"You're having fun with me, eh?" thought Carl to himself, working busily, "you're a nice old cat playing with your 'mouse' till your 'partner' comes. You go plumb to hell. I'll have something to say about that."

Receiving no answer Mr. Lane went on, "Going to the circus to-night?"

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"No, I'm going to bed as soon as I get sleepy."

"You don't sleep at night, do you?"

"What the hell do you think I do?"

"You didn't sleep last night."

"I didn't? How do you know whether I slept or not?"

"I heard you walking around and moaning and groaning half the night."

"You think you did."

"I heard you all right. You're sick, old man, and I don't know why you don't want to admit it."

"Say, what the devil are you driving at?" cried Carl in a rage, then immediately becoming alarmed at his own undue show of anger, bared his teeth in a bitter grin and went on, "I think it's you that's sick, or else you're stealing around my room, listening for something. But you heard the wrong man. That crazy Justo sleeps in my room. That's how Justo snores when he sleeps."

"But why get so angry, my friend? I wasn't stealing around your door. I'm nothing more than an innocent bookseller, why should I be stealing around your door?"

"I don't know what you are and don't give a damn. I only wish Mr. Kaye was here, he'd put you out in ten minutes."

"But listen, my dear fellow, be reasonable," cried Mr. Lane, rising from his seat and looking very much alarmed, "I don't know why you've got it in for me. I think you are sick. I thought you might want to go to the circus to-night. The weather's been nasty. A little fun will do you good. I have tickets. I have three of them. I expect my partner and I thought you might want to come."

"No, thanks," said Carl, "the truth is, I'm afraid I got the fever again. I was out in the rain yesterday."

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"You should be careful," said Mr. Lane very much relieved, "the fever here, for an American, is a tough proposition. You ought to have the doctor."

"No, I had it once before, a couple of months ago, the same thing I have now, but I got over it."

They went into a lengthy discussion on the best things to do for fever, but Carl sought by every available means to shorten and discourage it, and finally succeeded in getting rid of him.

"I'm going for the entire afternoon, will you leave the door open?" He asked a few minutes after, "I'll be back very late and will try not to disturb you."

It was a great relief to Carl to find himself alone again. The brute that the bookseller had brought out in him, went back into its lair in the depths of his being, and he staggered into his room. He sat down in his seat, shoved his books and papers away from him on the table, and folding his arms, dropped his head upon them. He was sleepy, weary and sick beyond expression, sick of the struggle yet unable to kill within himself, the desire to live, and when the trade winds blew up and came into the room laden with fragrance of the new growth, he let loose again in the tug-of-war, and fell headlong into slumber.

He was wandering down a road in Porto Rico, and came upon an old Spanish castle, made of red massive slabs of concrete, and extending from the road as far as the eye could see. There was one entrance, a peculiar one. He decided to enter the castle, and see what it was. Something lured him irresistably into it, and he went, though he was afraid to go. He opened the heavy door cautiously. No sooner was he beyond the sill, when the door of its own account shut with great force, and with a hollow sound that made him tremble.

He started off a few paces, then stopped. The

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dread thought came to him, "I'm back in prison. Oh, God and they're goin' to—" He rushed back and began to pull at the door, but it was hopeless, useless. He found himself in a frightfully long corridor. He saw doors and doors and doors, and started off in search of an open one. Was he really in prison? He cried to think he had been such a fool as to walk right into it. He passed door after door, and each door was the doorway to another corridor, and each dark corridor was lined with rows of dark doorways. He suddenly discovered that they were no doors at all, but heavy massive columns. He tried to go back, but the entrance door had disappeared. Whichever way he went, backward or forward, he saw nothing but heavy columns with black, terrifying darkness between. He started in the direction which he thought was the direction whence he had come, and ran and ran and ran till he stumbled and fell. When he picked himself up, he saw before him the opening into a huge square, empty room and walked in cautiously. There were several doors in that room and as soon as he entered the locks of all of them clicked and the fear of the trapped animal racked his heart and brain. He saw a great iron wrought window in the wall at the other end. A faint light, like the creeping of dawn, came through it and he slowly made his way there. He tried to look through the iron grates, but they were too high for him. Glancing about cautiously, he began to climb the grating.

He was looking into a vast court-yard with a glass roof over it, dirty and smoky like that he had seen at a railroad station. The floor was one deep jumble of color and motion, with red predominating. The mists and vapors began to clear away. The court-yard grew lighter, and he saw a mass of living beings, individuals dressed with long, red gowns. Red, red blood, dripped

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from the ground and ran off in streamlets on the floor. The horrible men held whips and they were bringing them down with cruel force upon bare, blood-stained backs. He became conscious of a violent effort on his own part to free himself from the grates, but he was trapped there too. He had to free himself. He must be free! It was a matter of life or death for somebody. He must rush down to the rescue at once. It all depended upon him and here he was tied, gripped by iron claws, trapped like an animal. He tore and pulled. They were all lashing one back, and the ends of these whips struck one face. He recognized the face. A frightful scream escaped him, "George, they are killing you." He tugged and tore. He screamed and pulled and beat his head against the grating, and beat himself insensible. He heard faint sounds of a bell. The bell sound died out. Into the universe poured the sweet sounds of a flute. Carl raised his head and breathed deeply.

The flute-player played a long while. The little band was now advertising the circus that had arrived in town, and the circus being a much more important event than the ordinary moving-picture show, he played and replayed his solo many times; and as long as he played, Carl sat motionless and listened. When the flute-player ceased playing, and the little band left the neighborhood in comparative silence, Carl walked into Don Federico's office. He looked for and found the record of the cello solo and played it; but he heard very little. Shutting his machine he hurried into Don Federico's bedroom. He needed money, but he didn't have much. He wanted to have enough to give what he could to his mother, feeling that she must, as always, be in need of it. He searched Don Federico's clothes, and found a few coins and a golden-cased fountain pen. He put these mechanically into his own pockets and

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went on searching till he found a little key. He tried the key in the lock of the safe and it worked. There was no money there at all. Squeezed into the small space was a pack of type-written manuscripts. He pulled out the bulk of it, and began to read:

> I am a criminal, therefore my heart is ever with the criminal, and I say that no man being perfect, all men are criminals. The difference between men is but a difference in the degree of their crimes, a difference in the degree of chance they fell heir to, and the best man with the best chance before God is not one bit better than the worst man with the worst chance. If there is a God, a father of this universe, he will some day fondle his weakest babes and shed the most tears over them.

Carl realized that he had been reading words mechanically, not one of which lodged in his mind, and realizing the hazardousness of his doings, he hurriedly forced the manuscript back into place. He was not satisfied with the way he had replaced the pack of sheets and pulled them out again. On the floor of the little safe, lay exposed a wallet. Carl grabbed it nervously, first looked about to make sure that no one had entered, then opened it. There were many large bills there. Carl did not stop to count them. He pulled out of the wad two fifty-dollar bills and replacing everything carefully, locked the safe and dropped the key into a pocket in one of Don Federico's coats. His head grew dizzy. He knelt by Don Federico's bed, and dug his face into the bed-clothes, till the dizzy spell passed over him. He rose and made preparations for his flight.

He called Justo to him and tried to make the poor idiot understand that he wanted him to remain at the

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house, and to go to bed without waiting for him, then left the old Spanish house, and walked down the street towards the heart of Humacao. It was very hot and the rains having kept people within doors so long, every one now seemed to have come out. A few paraded about the plaza, and many had already gone to the circus-tents on the outskirts of the village, and some were going there. Miss Carter, Miss Newhall, Mr. Lehan and a Porto Rican young man were strolling about the plaza. He stopped to look at them a moment and felt as if he were looking into a gay, bright world from which he had been banished, then turned and walked in the direction of San Juan, with the light of that world still dimly reflected in his brain, but dying out fast.

On the outskirts of the village, a few rods off from the road to San Juan, he saw the large, canvas tents lit up by smoking torches and electric lights, and the atmosphere vibrating with the enticing circus music. A great crowd of peons and other citizens with the reddish lights and shadows dancing upon their smiling faces, inscribed a semi-circle about a smaller one of boys and girls. The noisy music ceased, and a primly dressed American came out upon a little platform, leading a very beautiful American girl in tights of fanciful color and design. She stationed herself at the right of him, and assuming a majestic pose, stood motionless, gazing way out into the night; while her companion, with a great deal of gesticulation, in a speech in English, which very few in the audience understood, extolled the wonders of his silent statue-like performer. Carl stopped a moment. The sense of forlornness was heavily upon him and the gayety and light allured him. He gazed upon the face and figure of the girl and thought he saw a weariness expressed in her beautiful eyes similar to the weariness he felt. He drew nearer

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to her, fascinated. He was sure she was weary as he was and experienced a slight thrill with the thought that she was a comrade in his misery. Was she an outcast too? He thought, foolish man, that she looked down at him compassionately. He trembled. Why was he running, and where was he running to? Why shouldn't he stay? Suppose he was mistaken in the bookseller? He began to question himself, and to bring to mind all the different things the bookseller had done, and all he had been anxious to find out, but suddenly caught sight of two men approaching. If Theodore Lane's face had inspired him with suspicion, the face of his partner filled him with terror. The speaker ceased speaking, and with his partner disappeared. Carl stole into the midst of the stream of men and women that were pouring into the tent, and off to the road and away towards San Juan, the light that had suddenly been lit, extinguished, and his soul black as the night.

Incessantly, his tired feet beat the hard road to San Juan, as if they had been wound to go, and as if the controlling force to guide or stop them, had been dissipated.

For hours he walked up hill and down hill, under arches of bamboo where the road crossed the creeks, into villages and crowded streets and out of them, stared at, but unmolested, hurrying, hurrying, hurrying as if he were going to meet life and happiness rather than sorrow and death.

The flickering, flaring lights in the villages began to die down, and the distant voices of children and dogs forsook the deeper night. Over the ghostly stretches of white-covered tobacco fields hung gray mists. Peepers peeped and the fire-flies swung their lanterns maddened with joy.

Then the lovely sky clouded. It began to rain.

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Miserable to the limit of endurance he crawled half way up a hill that inclined from the road and under a mango sat down. The rain beat down with fury, and silenced the peepers, extinguished the lamps of the fire-flies, penetrated his mango roof, and saturated him as he sat in stolidity.

The rain ceased. The sky cleared again. The stars, the peepers and the fire-flies came out of their hiding, and Carl resumed his journey, his wet clothes helping the keepers of hell to torment him.

He passed country stores with sickly lights, bare-foot fruit-venders as dumb as he, and huts, boxed up as if the air were poisonous.

The happier Porto Ricans on their clean beds, the poor Porto Ricans on their dirty beds, the wretched peon and the more contented mountaineers on their hempen hammocks, were still asleep when near dawn, Carl reached Caguas. The new faint lights along the narrow sidewalks suggested wasted effort and the struggle to gain more energy to waste, and when Carl was on the lonely road again, he began to think resignedly. Beginning where he was, and going back to the first black impressions of his life, he found nothing worth fighting for. "The sooner all is over the better," the breeze sighed, "All men and all creatures have to die. The fellows that would, if he were caught, shove him into the dreadful chair, will, themselves, have to die, just as he will have to die, just as dogs have to die, and just as the happy peepers and the fire-flies have to die and disappear.

CHAPTER X.

It was eleven o'clock next day when Carl, aching, sore and sleepy, entered the trolley station at Rio Piedros, and boarded a car for San Juan. His clothes

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had dried during the morning shower of sunshine, but looked shabby and unclean. He fell asleep, and slept till the conductor woke him when they reached the plaza at San Juan. There was a joy and carelessness in the atmosphere of San Juan, but Carl merely saw the shadows of things, drowning in a sea of glaring colors and light, and reflections that hurt his eyes. His first impulse was to get to one of the benches, and to drop into it and off into sleep, but he thought he saw many Americans gliding about the walks, and decided that it wouldn't do to be found sleeping on a bench. It occurred to him, too, that it was necessary for him to buy his ticket at once, and he began to look for some one that might direct him to the pier. He accosted a tall, dark-faced policeman, who with a grin that exposed two rows of white teeth, made known his utter ignorance of English. He walked about for some time before he found an American, whom he dared approach. He saw a kindly-faced American woman, waiting for a Rio Piedros Car, and questioned her. She directed him as best she could, and after exerting a great deal of effort in trying to follow her directions, he came upon the ticket-office on the pier.

He waited before a very long counter, till a young Porto Rican with a pompadour came over to where he stood, and in good English wished to know what he could do for him.

"I want a third-class ticket to New York," said Carl, looking stupid.

The young man examined him curiously a while then asked with much surprise, "Steerage?"

"Yes."

The fellow sneered, hesitated a moment, then began to write on a ticket blank. When the ticket was made out Carl paid for it, and went off to spend the last few hours in Porto Rico, trying to urge himself into a

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greater indifference to his fate, having tasted some indifference and found it good.

He came to the plaza again, and passed it. From a hill-point to which the sidewalk climbed up, he saw in the distance, the swelling sea and hurried his steps thither, but the deep blue above, and the deeper blue below, the edgeless flow, and heave of the great bosom, and the flying gulls, only made him more restless.

Towards his right was a steep hill, and on the hill was a fort. The long stretch of shore about it was unoccupied. Before him in the loneliness he saw a huge rock, and made for it. He was within a few feet of reaching it, when out into the scintillating atmosphere of Porto Rico, poured the sounds of a bugle, the song of his wretched youth, the story of his reformatory life, all the recollections of his boyhood. He stood like a man in deep prayer, till the last note's echo was lost, then dragging his old world with him, he made the rock, and sank upon it, his cheeks in his hands his eyes, back of the fallen lids, still gazing out at sea.

He sat in that position a long time, when another bugle call awoke him. The shadows were lengthening. He reminded himself of his departing boat, and started terror-stricken for it. Porto Rico, the new world that it was to him, was now infested with evil, and he wanted to get away from it as soon as he could. The thought of having to wait for another boat was unbearable.

He reached the dock just in time. Wading through a crowd he found the sailors attacking the gang-plank, and rushed upon it.

Steerage consisted of the dirty corner at the prow of the boat, and Carl found a dozen or more dirty wretches, like rubbish scattered over the floor. A hurried glance at the faces about him told him that they were as anxious as he was—he saw sorrow writ-

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ten on some of them and thought of them as brothers. He wanted to think of them as brothers, for he hated to think of himself as alone.

The gang-plank was withdrawn, the ropes released, and the creaking of timber mingled and mixed with the last and most exciting farewells from the still upturned and the still smiling faces.

The docks receded, and so did San Juan, with all its new buildings climbing up the hill, bathed in the gold of sunset, the phosphorescent reflections in the windows and the ripples on the bay. And so Porto Rico went the way of his childhood and his youth. Night came. It was all a dream—his going as his coming had been. Every steerage passenger was buried in his own misery, and each sat upon his own particular projection, looking like so many toad-stools in the dimness of night.

CHAPTER XI.

Four and one half days of dirtiest dirt, four and one half days of bad odors and rocking, four and one half days of agony, and then came the sight of tall buildings wrapped in an atmosphere of lazy mists and smoke.

Bustle and commotion and gladness! Crowds of upturned, happy, beaming faces! The gang-plank was hurriedly dragged into place, and hurriedly fastened, and a great stream poured over it more hurriedly. First came the light-hearted, the happy, then came the steerage passengers—Christ's beloved "lowly and meek," driven from the consolation of Christ.

Oh, the heart-ache he experienced at the sight of the busy, noisy city streets! Oh, to get the permission from the some one, from the something, from the be-

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ing or force that ruled the great world, the permission to live on as those lived whom he saw crowding the streets and laughing joyfully! If he could undo that which had been done! Oh, for the joy of one more chance to go among one's kind without fear!

It was afternoon when he made his way along the familiar street, loaded down with remorse and terror, quaking before the fears that assailed him at every step. The desire to see his mother, the plan to fall upon her neck and beg her to help him, the images that had played about before his mind all through his gloomy voyage, had sent him in fever haste to where he now was, and now that he stood there leaning against the balustrades, he thought for the first time of his mother's weeping and wringing her hands, and all that she might say and do, and an impulse seized him to fly for the steamer again, and go back or go off to some other and more distant, more remote place. Why had he come back?

He walked into the tenement. No one was on the stairway. It seemed impossible for him to face his mother and Anna. The impulse to run away without seeing them fought with the impulse to rush up to end the hazardous voyage, and the conflict of those impulses intensified his daze and added great weight to his feet. At last he found himself rapping on his mother's door. The rap sounded hollow and sounded unanswered. He rapped again and again, but no answer came back. "I'm done," he cried within himself, "I'm done."

The door next to the one on which he had rapped, opened, and a woman whom he did not know, stuck out her head

"No one lives there, can't you see?" she said angrily and shut the door

"Crazy fool!" he cried when on the street again,

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swearing black oaths, "what made me come back here? I could have gone with the money to the other end of the world. What did I come back here for? Here! Idiot that I am!"

He aggravated himself into a rage, and for fear of those who passed him, the rage burned within, hidden. He walked along faster, hurried on headlong without having the slightest idea of where he was going to, or what he was going to do. He came upon a subway entrance. The people who were walking before him, started down—he started down with them. They stopped to pay money, he stopped in the line to pay. He left a coin, and took the ticket as others had taken theirs. The ticket agent called after him. A man in front of him touched him roughly on the arm and pointed to the ticket box. Others called his attention telling him to go for his change. He went back, took it, made no reply to the agent's remark, and went with the crowd to where he boarded a car. He found a vacant seat in a corner and sat down. There was still space for one or two people near him. He looked at the space blankly, then leaned back and shut his eyes, the motion of the subway bringing him momentary relief. The train stopped, the doors opened. A girl came in and sat down near him. He felt her presence. He opened his eyes and looked at her. She was very beautiful. She was healthy, happy, as delicate as the roses she wore on her bosom. Her face glowed. He looked into it as one might look into a flaming fire-place. It led him off and away. A man came in. He expected her to move in the other direction, but she didn't. She moved towards him. She wasn't afraid of him. Oh, he could have died for sheer thankfulness! Her body touched his body, her foot touched his and she wasn't afraid of him, she didn't move away. The perfume, the smell

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of roses, it was a whiff of beauty, of the best of life. It was the cello solo and the flute player. It was Porto Rico and its sunshine—it was everything.

They passed a number of stations and then came to one where she got up and left. He felt cold and alone again. His soul was going mad with longing. He could not continue riding. At the next station he got off. He climbed a flight of stairs and descended others. He left another coin, and took another train. This car was crowded. There were no seats, and he stood up and swayed with the swaying of the car. She was nowhere to be found. She was gone forever, like everything else in his life that he had ever desired.

Hours of oblivion passed. It was deep night, and he stood before Androon's hotel. He had been following Alice. He had been following a faint uncertain light, and it led him to Androon's hotel. He did see her. He wanted to stop her, to talk with her, but she wouldn't wait for him. She disappeared on the other side of Androon's doors. He was determined to follow her. He grabbed hold of the door that had swallowed her. A horrible feeling of nausea brought back some bit more of his consciousness. It was Androon's hotel! He saw the room, and the corpse. He wanted to see it. He wanted to see whether it was still there. He held the door. It was very hard to open.

He felt a hand on his arm. He turned. Some one was pulling at him. Two men were pulling at him. They were gripping his wrists. He wanted to scream, and pull those wrists, but a sudden change came over him. He saw the faces, saw the expressions on those faces, and he hated them with a bitter hatred, a hatred that had gone to sleep in him, and that now awoke. They had handcuffed him, and he marched with them. For the moment the breeze had blown out the flickering

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candle that Don Federico had lighted. He followed them, but not meekly. He followed with an air of pretentious indifference. His pale death-like face was almost grinning.

Within was consternation smoldering under the attempt to smother it. "Fool, idiot, lunatic! Why did I come back here into their clutches? You deserve it all you damned coward, you damned fool! Walk right into their hands! Oh, I'm done!"

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OH, THE END OF SOME OF US!

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PART IV

OH, THE END OF SOME OF US!

CHAPTER I.

Rumors of various kinds concerning his "Americano" soon reached Don Federico in his traveling. As soon as he had verified some of them, he abandoned his duties long enough to return to Humacao, and make such arrangements as were imperative.

His neighbors and friends in Humacao were fired with an intense curiosity concerning the relations between him and his Americano protégé, and having exhausted all other means of satisfying that curiosity, fell upon Don Federico as soon as he arrived, and pestered him with questions, offering a conglomeration of observations and opinions.

Don Federico was heart-sore and discouraged over the whole matter. At times he read the information, the facts, and the rumors of what Carl had done, as the doings of a man whose inherent worth he had greatly overestimated. Some times he became downright angry at him, railed at his selfishness, and condemned his theft. There was no excuse at all, he thought, for stealing. After all he had done for him. After all he had shown himself willing to do for him. By the time Don Federico was ready to go on with his trip, as General Superintendent, he ceased being angry, and began to think of the mysterious departure, in a new light—he concluded that Carl had not run off because of the few dollars he had stolen. He wanted to come to that conclusion for the sake of the theories

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of life that were dear to him, and sought for his evidences with a passionate vigor.

He shut up his house, paid one of the cafetina keepers for a month's board for Justo, and went back to his duties of General Superintendent with a trifle less enthusiasm.

The month went by very quickly, and Don Federico returned to Humacao, arriving at his house early one Friday afternoon, and facing it with a strange feeling. The home he used to return to with joy and contentment seemed unendurably desolate. He located Justo. Justo was glad to see him, his ugly eyes filled with tears, and he wobbled after him, wriggling like a happy little dog.

Don Federico felt considerably better, when after school, half the boys of the town filled his gloomy, silent rooms with life and noise. Everybody, as usual, was glad to see him, and his porch and office were crowded with those who came to greet him and to hear once more the concerts they had missed. And the naked and half-baked youngsters came flying in for their pennies, and later devoured the "dulce" they bought with them, blessing Don Federico with their unworded delight. The bigger fellows, without saying a word to Don Federico, rushed into poor Carl's kitchen, and dragged their horrible instruments from their hiding, and yelling, singing and playing, they acted a hundred times more hilariously than they had ever acted before the strange Americano had appeared to take the privilege away from them.

Don Federico gave them but a short concert that night, claiming to be tired, and then started for bed. Justo in his half dumb way, refused to sleep in the room with the open books turned over on the table, and Don Federico, himself, experiencing a queer feeling at sight of them, found other quarters for the idiot.

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When Don Federico returned to his room he found it impossible to sleep. After spending half an hour thinking, he found himself looking about the room as if he expected to see some one. He became very nervous. Taking down a book that he had bought on his trip, he sat half the night away, reading it.

Weeks went by. The spirit of the melancholy, tramp-like youth, with his sad, penetrating, furtive eyes, refused to leave the house and as Don Federico sat through the long hours smoking and gazing at those eyes, he saw reflections in them, faint distant lights, of other days. There came with that uncertain discovery a great desire, a consuming longing to go back to New York, and whatever he did, or wherever he went, that longing grew more and more intense, more and more irresistible.

It was about time that he took a vacation! He was tired. He became anxious about his mother, and poor Will—an old man now. He wondered how he had been able to stay away so long!

One day in the latter part of November, he hired an automobile and whirled into San Juan to see the commissioner. He found the commissioner out and went for a walk—the commissioner was not to return for several hours. He entered a stationery store to buy some photographs which he saw in the show-case, outside. The storekeeper took his money, and went off to get the required change, and Don Federico, waiting for him, picked up one of the newspapers, which lay in a row and opening it, saw a picture of Carl Henny. He paid for the paper, and hurried out upon the plaza where he found a secluded bench, and sat down to devour the dreadful details. The headlines told the story. HELD FOR MURDER OF CHARLES J. ANDROON, WEALTHY HOTEL KEEPER AND PHILANTHROPIST. But he read every detail. He read the whole thing

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several times. "Found wandering about the hotel, where the crime had been committed." Don Federico felt with him, and for him. He understood all the mysteries, and felt all the agony and heartaches, that without knowing, he had seen racking him.

The paper was a week old. Cutting the article from it, he shoved it into his wallet and hurried off to the commissioner's office. The commissioner had not yet returned. Glad that he wasn't there, Don Federico asked for some paper, and an envelope, and very nervously wrote his resignation to take effect immediately, and sealing it in the envelope, left it there, and rushed off to his bank, where he had his savings transferred to a bank in New York. At the steamship office, he bought passage on the steamer leaving at the end of that week, then, returning to the plaza, he ordered the chauffeur, who sat in his machine, waiting for him, to drive him to Humacao as fast as he could.

The citizens of Humacao were amazed at the sudden announcement of the sale of all of Don Federico's belongings, and his proposed sudden departure. Some of them looked upon it as a calamity, and the little city buzzed with rumors and excitement. Everything went at a sacrifice, from the house to the last of his books, and very early the following Saturday morning, he stepped into the automobile, his face darkened with gloom and smiling heartlessly. Taking off his hat, he bowed to the crowd that had gathered about the machine, and rode off, too much excited to see the faces of the little bootblacks who had risen early to see him off. Gazing at him, they had stood there with sorrow written all over their faces, talking rapidly in whispers to each other. It was like a funeral.

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CHAPTER II.

The day was bitter cold when Don Federico arrived in New York, early in December. The sidewalks were dry and snowless and a sharp, biting wind swept over them and through the streets. Things had completely changed since he had seen New York last, on that stormy night, and he walked about uncertain of his way. It was as if the city buildings had all been living things and each of them had grown taller and more aged looking. Only the mark of misery, legibly impressed upon everything in the streets of the poor, seemed to have remained unchanged. The slums were as dirty and gloomy as ever and the people were wan with the rushing that never ceased; and the young had so replaced the old, it seemed still the same generation, the generation he had seen rushing itself to death, twenty years back. The slum world had widened, extending itself in all the four directions and towards the sun, shutting out its light and polluting the higher atmosphere.

Throughout his four and one half days at sea, Don Federico had kept to himself. He had lain for long hours in his stateroom seeing himself hurrying about the lower end of the city from one clear, illuminated point of memory to another, and had worked himself up to an impatient anxiety to reach it, but now that he was there, the bitter cold to which he was unused and the fear that had come over him, the fear to meet the ghosts of his old world, took his strength away. The short, biting, cold, December day was waning. The cold became unendurable and he desired rest and warmth. He came upon a modest-looking little hotel and entered the lobby. A number of men sat and lounged about smoking, chewing and spitting.

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A bell-boy took him up to a room on the second floor. The room was far from luxuriant in size or furnishings, but the excessive heat coming from the sizzling radiators was a great comfort to him. He pulled off his heavy coat, threw it carelessly upon a chair, tore off the collar from his neck, lit a cigar, spread his papers on the bed, drew his chair to it and sat down to read breathlessly.

The trial was drawing to a close and everything so far seemed to go against him. The papers said that he had committed the crime with the help of another fellow, a friend of his, a fellow graduate of the city reformatory, who, for lack of sufficient evidence, had been sent to prison for life. But Henny's was the master mind in the diabolical scheme to carry off Androon's money and to save themselves the need of working. One paper spoke of his widowed mother and shed the usual newspaper crocodile tears over her undeserving suffering at the hands of her profligate son. He was no good and never had been any good. His record was as black as the record of a boy of his age could be. He had played truant when but a little fellow at school. At the reformatory he had been almost ungovernable and the reformatory officials told of incidents that had convinced them years ago that he was destined to die in the chair. Leaving the reformatory he went into partnership with a street-walker, and one evening was arrested in a gang fight in which he had wielded a long knife with great brutality and for which he was sentenced to two years' service in the State's penitentiary. Hardly had he enjoyed liberty a month, —liberty for which he had been waiting these two years, when he committed the dastardly crime for which he was being tried and for which the people desired his life.

Don Federico followed the reported career of the

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sad-eyed boy and, when through, paced the floor, enraged.

"I don't believe a word of it," he cried as he went from wall to wall. "The cowards! They lie! They are pounding a man when he's down. They are licking their bloody chops, but they shall not eat!"

He returned to the heap of papers on his bed and once more went through every horrifying column of every horrifying page, in the hope that somewhere he would come upon Matilda's address. The search was a futile one and wearied him. He paced the floor again. He peered out of his window a dozen times. Queer feelings possessed him at sight of the city, in whose cold atmosphere he could see a snowflake now and then. Again he went to his papers and again he searched, but even had the address he sought been there he could not have found it with such weary searching. When he peered out of the little window again the atmosphere was all white and the clear individual flakes came down rapidly and beautifully, but the sight of them, graying the masses of black, made his heart too heavy. He wished to go right out into the stormy city and stood awhile debating with himself whether he ought to or not. His wearyness was intense. He returned to his papers; perhaps he would find the address this time; but this time he fell asleep on them and slept till morning.

During the first second of his wakefulness he experienced the contentment of his long uninterrupted Porto Rican existence—he thought he was at home in Humacao—then it all came to him with a blow. The newspaper articles, their foul attacks, society's licking its fangs with a terrible cold-blooded desire for the blood of its kind, sickened him and terrorized him. Thoughts and images of the dreadful little chair tormented him as if it were he who was to be fed to it.

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The agony the poor wretched victim would have to endure was his agony, and almost unendurable.

It was only five o'clock. The winter morning was still dark and the street lights were still burning. The streets were covered with a veil of snow and occasionally the half-hearted wind brought more snow and stirred the whiteness already laid.

His back bent, his hands in his pockets, he made his way over the sidewalk in the twilight darkness of the sad winter morning, his feet growing wet in the snow and he hardly able to concentrate his mind long enough on that discomfort to find a way of preventing their further getting wet and adding to his agony.

He found himself on the triangular space. The wind blew sharply there and tore at him physically and the winds in his brain tore at his soul. It was yet somewhat dark. The changes that had taken place there were many but not many enough to have shed the associations that clung to every dark mass in every direction, even the sky and the clouds and the opening showing the river. He saw the orphanage, and a dark sadness, darker by far than the cold winter darkness, lay upon it, gripping every edge and obliterating brick, lines, and ornamentations. So was the school and so was the factory building, save that to both of these there were additions. The factory building reared its ugly head further into the smoky atmosphere, and near the school a tenement had gone down to give space to an annex of the school.

For hours it seemed to him, he paraded that triangular space as if it were some happy Porto Rican plaza, and one time, his feet painfully wet, he started for the river side. The changes on the banks had been tremendous and he stood there with a feeling that his Hudson River had been despoiled. Oh, the ravages of time!

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He returned to the factory building and stationed himself near the entrance. He remembered having read that Carl's mother had toiled for him in the shops, and was still toiling there. And he hoped if he couldn't see her, he might see some one else that he might recognize, who might know of her whereabouts. The crowds began to pour into the factory. All of them stared back at him and made him very uncomfortable. The streams pouring in from three directions became more and more narrow and finally narrowed to a few stragglers, but not one face was familiar to him. He followed the last straggler and began climbing the old worn-out wooden stairways. The office where he had worked those many years back was completely and almost unrecognizably changed and he walked into it like a man looking for a job, gazing about him furtively and depressed with a fear of doing wrong. There were a number of girls at work in the office and a few young men. The name John J. Donald, shirt manufacturer, was on the office door. One young man, the prototype of the young Donald that Don Federico knew, sat at his desk with an air of supreme importance. Don Federico approached him three times before he took the trouble to show that he was conscious of having been approached.

"What do you want?" he finally demanded.

Don Federico explained his errand and the young peacock grew angry.

"I haven't any time to bother with such things," he cried, very much offended.

But the young man's conceit struck Don Federico as very amusing, and instead of being hurt, he persisted till, in desperation, the angry manager called for the bookkeeper and ordered that minor official to give "this man" the information he wanted.

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"Nobody here by that name and never was," said the frowning bookkeeper, perched on his high stool.

"How do you know that there never was?" demanded Don Federico.

"I ain't got no time to make any arguments," cried the bookkeeper and, turning about on his stool, buried himself in his books.

"You're a young idiot," grumbled Don Federico and made his way out. A sense of despair came over him as he made his way to the criminal court building, a feeling of estrangement, of alienation from his kind. The feeling deepened as he neared the court-house and as it deepened there lowered over the great city a mist of remoteness, and the darker that mist grew the less remoteness, in his mind, was there to Porto Rico. The rainy season would soon be over and then there would be sunshine and brightness. He longed for Porto Rico and wished he had not been obliged to leave it. In the innermost depths of his soul he thought selfish thoughts. He wished Carl had not landed on Porto Rico. He felt that his peace of mind had permanently been wrecked. He regretted, deep down in his soul, the loss of his contentment, the contentment he had struggled for so many years to acquire, yet nothing could have driven him back to that contentment.

There were a few loungers about the lobby of the criminal court building—little groups against pillars here and there. The doors of that part of the court where Carl's trial was to be continued were still closed, but people had already begun gathering before them. Don Federico stationed himself against one of the pillars near which a group of men were talking about the case, and watched carefully every face that came in and listened eagerly to every word that was uttered. The crowd grew larger and every one started for the doors, Don Federico among them, his heart beating

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painfully, his limbs weak under him. Near him in the crowd stood a fat individual, well dressed and bejewelled, smoking a cigar and talking emotionly and bitterly. His red bloated face fairly screamed the fact that never in all his life had he denied himself a single sensual pleasure, however abnormal his desires grew.

"I want to get another look at the ——— ——— ———," he said bitterly between his teeth, "before they give him the 'juice'."

Don Federico's blood rushed to his head. The impulse to turn about and fall upon him seized him, but he controlled himself. The big man, he saw furtively, could crush him with a single blow.

The whole crowd talked about the case. Oh, how unbearable were the conjectures and philosophies of those idle curiosity seekers, uttering words like daggers and tearing his flesh with each of them. A melancholy drowsiness came over him as he waited and watched, and he began to feel all his combative strength leaving him. At intervals he was seized with feverish trembling. He kept his eyes open, however, and never ceased watching, and as he watched, he prayed to the powers of his soul to sustain him.

A man in uniform arrived and waded through the crowd as one would wade through a patch of tall weeds. He opened the doors and stationed himself against them, refusing to admit the crowd and commanding them to wait. Suddenly Don Federico felt a hand upon his shoulder. The fat man, for whom he had an instinctive horror, had placed his hand upon him in passing him on his way to the door. Reaching it, the fat man walked right past the guard, who bowed and smiled. A group of four young women, led by some other official in civilian clothes who made way for them among the crowd, also passed the guard without protest.

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Don Federico decided to wait no longer. Making his way between the very few that were before him, he approached the guard and was about to speak to him, when the guard seized him, as if he were a board, and with him shoved back the forward pressing crowd. Don Federico tore himself loose and commanded the guard to listen to him.

"What do you want?" the fellow demanded, his petrified features becoming more rigid, his eyes flashing fire.

"I want to talk to you about getting in here," cried Don Federico as boldly as his condition allowed him.

"Have you got a pass?"

"No, but—"

"Well, you ain't any better'n anybody else."

"But I have just as much right to get in there as anybody else."

"Go on, get back," he cried, shoving him. "I ain't goin' to stand here an' argue with you."

"I have just as much right to go in there as any of those nicely dressed young ladies," cried Don Federico, hurt at the derogative remarks the guard was making in the hearing of everybody in the crowd.

"Well, now then I'll show you that you won't get in at all."

He kept his word. The time of opening the morning session drew near and the greater part of the crowd was admitted, but every attempt Don Federico made to get in, he was driven back till the court-room filled to its capacity and the guard, with a grin on his face, shut the doors.

Don Federico was crushed. He stationed himself against one of the pillars. What he stood there for, he did not know. It was impossible for him to leave. He would have attempted to bribe the guard, but his anger was too great—he couldn't face him. He began

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to deliberate upon feasible plans that would get him in, but did not have the energy to attempt to carry them out. No one in the crowd looked at all like Matilda or Anna, or any one else that he knew, except the fat man, and him he tried to drive from his thoughts. The impulse came upon him to fly to his home in the Catskills and there wait till the whole dreadful thing was over.

He left the lobby and came out upon the cold street and there he changed his mind. He bought a later edition of one of the newspapers and returned to the warm lobby to read it. At the end of every paragraph he muttered unintelligibly, "They just want to kill him, that is all." Suddenly his eyes lit upon a name that he had seen several times before, and that till then had made no impression upon him. He began to think. "District Attorney Purton! Purton!" With a flash came to his mind a thousand associations, and he saw as many images of Columbia Heights, his room, the College, the whole student body, the professors, and, dominating that whole mass of images was the vague face of the student neighbor who had roomed above him. Purton had climbed the ladder of life and had reached the great height of District Attorney in the largest city in the Union. There was but a slight bit of envy among Don Federico's thoughts, but even that bit disappeared. "The hangman, the butcher, the dog-catcher, the man with the dreadful duty, the man whose gain lies in the wretchedness of others, who gains by ruining others, by making children orphans, mothers childless, and happy wives widows—a throne upon death and wreckage. But he may help. He must help."

Don Federico folded up his paper, fixed his tie, brushed off some of the perspiration he felt on his forehead, and started up a great flight of stairs to the

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District Attorney's office on the third floor. He was out of breath when he got there, and stopped a moment to readjust himself. In the District Attorney's office he was stopped by a broad-shouldered individual, seated at a desk in the first room that he entered.

"I want to see Mr. Purton," said Don Federico, trembling slightly.

"What do you want to see Mr. Purton about?" he demanded with a scowl upon his face.

"I can't tell *you* what I want to see him about, but I must see him."

"You can't see him unless you first tell me what you want to see him about," said the scowling individual and resumed his work as if that was all he intended doing about it.

Don Federico looked at him awhile, his angry despair digging down into his vitality. "I've got to see Mr. Purton."

"I told you, you can't see him, unless you first tell me what you want."

"I can't tell you what I want. I'm an old friend of Mr. Purton, and when I see him you'll be sorry for keeping me back."

The man sat back in his seat. "You are a friend of Mr. Purton?"

"Yes sir, I am."

"Why didn't you tell me that before? We can't let everybody see him that wants to see him."

Don Federico looked his impatience, but the official finished his apology, then informed Don Federico that the District Attorney was out of town, that he would not return till evening, and that he was not going to come to the office till the next morning.

Don Federico then asked for the District Attorney's home address, but the official wouldn't even hear of giving it, and that was all there was to it. He

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didn't care whether he was a friend of his or not. Don Federico argued. He begged and appealed to him. It was important, absolutely necessary. The official would have thrown him out, but he was afraid to. Suddenly they were interrupted by the appearance of a very pretty young woman with an enormous feather in her hat. She came to inquire something of the District Attorney's watch dog, and Don Federico went off to a side of the room and sat down to wait. She talked and talked for fifteen minutes, asking the same questions over again till the official himself grew tired of it in spite of her being very pretty. At last she took herself off and Don Federico resumed his arguing. He told him that Mr. Purton and he had roomed together when students at Columbia and that something had happened that had brought him across the ocean to see him.

The official finally relinquished.

"If I do you the favor and give you his address, you won't ever under any circumstances tell who gave it to you, will you?"

Don Federico promised, took the address which the man had written on a piece of paper and was about to go.

"That's doing you a great favor, old man," said the official with some hesitation, which hesitation Don Federico understood. "I wouldn't do this for everybody."

Don Federico wasn't quite convinced that he had really done anything for him that he should not have done for any one else, but he was glad enough to have the address and willing to pay for it.

"I'm very thankful to you," he replied and, pulling out his pocketbook, he took from it a dollar bill and asked the man to have a "smoke on it."

Downstairs he waited around till the noon recess,

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when the doors burst open and the crowd began to pour out. Don Federico scrutinized every face that passed him, but, with the exception of the bediamonded individual who wanted "to see the —— —— —— once more before they gave him the 'juice'," and the guard's brutally triumphant face, he recognized no one.

Nor was he more successful in the afternoon. With the crowd pouring out of the court-room again at three o'clock that afternoon, he left the building.

All his parading about the slum streets where a warm wind had reduced the white snow to a dirty slush, was no more fruitful. At Mr. Purton's home at dinner time that evening, just as at his office, he was obliged to fight for admission; but the first victory had given him heart with which to fight for his second. After awhile he was left in the doorway while the attendant went within to report to the District Attorney the visitor's persistence. Very much out of patience, the District Attorney located his pistol, placed it in his back pocket, and went to the doorway, followed by the attendant.

At the first sight of Mr. Purton's face, Don Federico was overwhelmed with the change he saw there, and found it hard to speak. The boyishness that he remembered, now seeing the older face, was gone. Deep furrows ridged his forehead and his eyes were strained with anxious searching. His face was much flabbier and a rigid severity played over every feature of it. "He has become a blood-hound," was the first thought that suggested itself to him, but he went about explaining himself, as best he could.

Mr. Purton's face frowned a great deal at first, then, after a lengthy description of himself, Don Federico succeeded in bringing a faint smile over the Attorney's countenance.

Mr. Purton invited him in, and, though he saw

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very little, Don Federico felt as if he had entered some rich old castle. The furniture was as rich as it might have been in a castle and equally as inviting.

They came into a private study where, near a beautiful fireplace, they sat down, one on each side. The District Attorney stretched himself comfortably in his thick-cushioned morris-chair and, gazing at his visitor scrutinizingly, waited for him to go on speaking.

"Mr. Purton," began Don Federico, unable to smother a desire to smile sadly, as he looked at the potent politician and saw behind him the simple boy-like face of his old classmate and neighbor, who had worried him then with a lack of seriousness and now with an overbearing severity. "I have come to appeal to you to help me. You must help me. It is a matter of—"

The effort to be pleasant exhausted itself, and Mr. Purton's face became again as cold and lifeless as it had been when it first appeared in the doorway. Don Federico's heart sank.

He finished his plea, giving the necessary details as rapidly as he could, but the importance of the matter made no impression on the District Attorney. Several times in his nervous recital he was on the verge of crying out upon him, "Don't you hear? Are you made of stone?"

"There are a few unwritten laws in the District Attorney's office," began Mr. Purton, frowning harder than ever, "and one of them is this: We never interfere with each other—under no circumstances. I have helped a little, it is true, but I have practically given the case over to my assistant, Mr. Winton. He's the man you must see about this."

"But I don't know him," said Don Federico, "while I do know you and you must help me, Mr. Purton. For God's sake forget all that aged stuff. What are

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you telling me about going to him for. I came to you because I know you, because we lived together, because—"

Don Federico was going to add, "Because I know that we all do wrong and have done wrong," but the deepening frown on the District Attorney's face drove that thought away.

"I don't know the man," he began again.

"I don't know that he could do anything for you, if he did know you."

"But you can. Nobody except the Governor of the State can do more than you can."

The flattery pleased Mr. Purton. He smiled. "I can't do a thing, Mr. Kaye."

"If this were your own brother you *could* help him."

"If my own brother committed the crime he has committed, I shouldn't want to help him."

"But if some one came and proved to you that your brother was not entirely to blame,—"

"That's just talk, Mr. Kaye. We must hold ourselves responsible for what we do. He killed a man, and I don't see why he shouldn't pay the price that all must pay who commit that crime."

"Do you mean to tell me, Mr. Purton, that you would be willing to electrocute your own brother? Does it mean nothing at all when you hear of a man whom you have convicted, going to the chair? Doesn't it make you tremble to convict an abused boy to such an untimely and horrible death? You who used to think so much of having good times?"

Don Federico went on, but he felt that it was useless. He pleaded with him. He begged him. He appealed to his feelings and to his reason, but it was a hopeless task. The District Attorney, with calculating

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brutality, sat unmoved, decided to allow him to pour out all that was in him.

"Will you make it possible for me to go into the court-room every day?" asked Don Federico, exhausted.

"You can go into the court room. Any citizen can."

"There's another of your make-believes," cried Don Federico bitterly. "You know I can't go in. I don't want to rush in like one of a flock of sheep. I want to go in in the same fashion that all the other favorites of the court go in. I want you to give me a letter that will take me in there without any trouble."

Mr. Purton rose and, without a word, walked out. Don Federico glanced about the room. He saw himself in a looking-glass and saw that his face was extremely red. He hadn't pleaded hard enough, he told himself, and determined to plead harder when Purton returned, plead hard enough to win. He must win. It was a matter of life and death. He would never sleep again if he had ever to feel that he hadn't pleaded hard enough. But when the cold, lifeless face of the District Attorney appeared, Don Federico came to a full realization of the utter uselessness of anything he could say. He accepted the letter handed him, and, rising, turned to his old-time classmate with the perfunctory desire to make a last plea, but he saw the sanction of murder on every feature, and left.

CHAPTER III.

Don Federico appeared in the lobby of the court-building early next morning, his hand holding on to the District Attorney's letter in his coat pocket, as if he was afraid of losing it. Stationing himself against a pillar, he looked anxiously to the doors of the court-

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room and to the entrance to the building, alternately. When the guard appeared, Don Federico made his way through the crowd and handed him the letter. The guard had a hard time reading it, and pretending to doubt its validity, told Don Federico to wait. In the meantime, the court favorites were going in rapidly, and Don Federico feared he would find no seat near enough to hear what was going on. His anger was white hot. He could have jumped at the wretched guard's throat and choked him to death. The guard seemed to realize that and smiled with the satisfaction of a bully. Finally, Don Federico caught sight of the Captain of the court attendants, and laid the matter before him. The Captain admitted him reluctantly.

The spectators' seats were arranged in two divisions. The one nearest to the bar was reserved for favorites of the court, the other and larger division was for the rabble, the mob. Between the two divisions was a uniformed officer who admitted some, and refused admittance to others. Don Federico approached him, but the guard drove him back, refusing to listen to what he had to say or to read the letter.

"These seats are good enough for you," he remarked as he laid his hand upon Don Federico and pushed him back.

The crowd not having been allowed to enter as yet, Don Federico found a seat in the first row of the "rabble" division and sat down to watch, and wait, to worry, and to think.

Again he saw the fat, bediamonded individual enter. The Captain met him at the door and Don Federico saw the privileged character hand the official something. It occurred to Don Federico, then, that men pay for their seats. Accordingly he pulled out of his pocketbook a ten-dollar bill, crumpled it in his hand,

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and approached the Captain, saying he wanted to see him a moment.

"Captain," he began, when they were off to the side, "I am very anxious to get in here regularly and will gladly pay you whatever you may demand, if you will see that I am admitted without any trouble."

"Pay!" said the Captain as if he had never heard of such a thing. "People don't buy their seats here, but you know everybody's trying to get in to attend this case."

"That's so," said Don Federico, "but I'm interested in the prisoner and am going to try to help him."

The Captain seemed a bit impatient. He didn't care to hear the long story, and Don Federico brought it to an untimely but very satisfactory end, by slipping the crumpled bill into the Captain's hand and promising to give him more at the end of the trial, if he saw to it that he had no more trouble in getting in.

The Captain's attitude immediately changed to one of extreme deference and he led Don Federico into the privileged division.

Soon the doors opened and the rabble poured in, rushing for seats. The court-room filled rapidly and the drone of voices grew louder and spread over all the room. In spite of himself Don Federico trembled and felt indescribably wretched, physically and mentally. Something caused him to turn about and there, talking to his neighbor and grinning with satisfaction, was the bediamonded individual, and for the first time, like a flash, it came upon Don Federico that he knew the man. It was the pedantic young Donald grown older and fatter and very ugly.

Now that he knew him, Donald appeared even more terrible than he had when Don Federico had first heard him in the midst of the chop-licking mob. He now saw in him the voluptuous fiend personifying the

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whole of society arrayed against the shivering boy, and he felt an instinctive urge to fall upon him and to tear into him.

Three sharp raps silenced the noisy gathering. A side door at the extreme front opened and his honor, the judge, walked in rapidly, on his face a frowning expression of potency, on his shoulders a medieval robe spreading like great black wings with the motion of his walk. The rapping individual, the captain of the attendants, sang out an unintelligible drone-like formula with the purpose of inspiring the auditors with the dignity of the court, which dignity it must have been feared would not be noticeable without the formal designation. Don Federico felt that every one had arisen, and arose, too, standing there till the spectators about him sat down, then sat down with them, doing his best to regain the control of himself which his emotions had taken from him.

As soon as the judge had listened to a number of preliminary motions, he called for the prisoner, and every head turned to the back of the room. The little door there opened and another uniformed guard appeared. Behind him, and in front of another guard, walked the prisoner.

To Don Federico the terrified being was but the shadow of a man. He wore a shabby suit and his extremely pale face was hedged in by a neglected growth of a boyish beard and by the disheveled, unkempt hair on his head.

"They have already killed him," cried Don Federico within himself and, whirling about, faced front and folded his arms—fearing that his hands trembling on his knees, might attract attention.

He shut his eyes tight and dwelt upon the impression Carl's appearance had made upon his mind. Everything about that face and dark form had been

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black and chaotic. A mysterious light had pierced the dark form and focussed upon the pale features. The pale face with the touch of resignation, of sorrow, of fear, and of despair, encased in the shabby blackness of clothes and hair, the downcast eyes heavy with humiliation, made him look like a living picture of the "man of sorrows." This was the image, too, of the sad-eyed youth, who had come from the infinite to the hotel door in Humacao and had called upon his aid that distant afternoon. This was the boy who had found a way to his heart and had banished from his life the contentment it had taken so many years of struggle to acquire.

Don Federico slowly opened his eyes. Before him, on the other side of a little gate, sat the prisoner near the lawyer that the State had provided for him. He sat erect and motionless, his hands where they had limply dropped on the wooden arms of his chair. Behind him sat a guard, watching him, "lest himself should rob the scaffold of its prey."

Don Federico was anxious to follow the proceedings carefully. He intended to speak to the lawyer after adjournment of court and to offer him assistance. It was absolutely necessary for him to know just what was going on if he was to be of any help, but his eyes fell upon the disheveled hair which, cut against the elongated windows at the right of the judge, seemed as delicate and silky as the hair of a baby. Occasionally a stir in the air of the room lifted a hair or two and laid it down again, bringing back into Don Federico's mind the image of a little head—a tiny reddish head with a few silky hairs upon it.

He admonished himself. He must not wander off. He must listen and he tried to listen, but the droning of court formalities made him heartsick. In the gloom of this great death-house prowled ghastly figures, and

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Don Federico felt their presence, and his mind, loaded down with horror of them, was incapable of following the movements of the game, even if his sense of justice should not have resented these formulas and ceremonies as a justification for the killing of the fear-racked boy in the prisoner's dock.

Mr. Winton walked slowly up and down before the first row of six jurors, like a reasoning tiger, explaining with frightful logic some matter that had been taken up the day before. A witness entered. Some went before her to show her the way, and she followed blindly. Her eyes were downcast and she picked her way trembling with fear, as if her limbs were not her own. Her clothes were gaudy as was her painted face with its expression of fear. Dissipation had left its ugly traces upon her—her cheeks were caving in, and her eyes already sunken were ominously blue-rimmed. Before the witness stand she hesitatingly placed her soiled hand upon the soiled Book, soiled with the perspiration of so many feverish hands, and sat down when the guard had finished the rapid mumbling of the sacred formula, terminating with the words, "So help you God." How much she needed help! But that they left to God!

She shrank from the sight of Carl, who gazed at her with the stare of a dead man. She was asked to identify him, but she couldn't face him. She turned her head away. The Assistant District Attorney grew impatient. He demanded that she point out the prisoner, to identify him in the presence of the jury, to show that he was the man she was going to talk about. The justice came to the lawyer's assistance and together they frightened her into an appreciation of the importance of doing exactly what was asked of her.

She gazed at him, bewildered. He turned his head. Quickly lifting her arms, she pointed to him, to the

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complete satisfaction of the jury and the attorney. It was a dramatic moment. The crowd was hushed. Not a sound was heard in the room. The doomed tree was creaking, and the creaking was the first intimtaion of the anticipated crash. Her hand dropped to her side and she looked away from him again, and those that had slightly risen in their seats sat back with satisfaction—they had witnessed something great—something awe-inspiring, something they could tell about at home that night.

At first sound of her voice, Carl turned his head again and looked sadly into her trembling face. Like a strong light that ugly face, so beautiful to him, flooded out everything before him, and in the radiance he saw the panoramic view of a stretch in his past. Several times in his illusory ecstasy he felt himself rising —seeing only her, he was going to go to her—but as often something metallic gripped his shoulders and held him down; and all the while that he bathed in the light of her face, she was helping the men, the iron, heartless men, the human anachronisms, with their insurmountable bulwarks against every human emotion; helping them to strap him to the burning chair.

Her examination lasted all that day, and when her story ended, she had established a motive—one of the motives—and fixed his guilt unshakably upon him; but the society that had driven her to barter her soul for a roof had fixed a similar doom as unshakably upon her. Alice went back to the street to drag her weary body through another year or two of sorrow, abuse, shame, hunger and despair and to come to her end in a protracted electrocution.

Court adjourned at half-past two, and it was long after three before the attendants succeeded in driving out the crowd that persisted in its attempt to get near to the "man that had to swing."

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When the court-room was partially clear, the two guards led the prisoner back to his cell and, a few minutes later, the stuffy court-room was deserted by all save the lawyer for the defence, a reporter to whom he was talking, and Don Federico, who stood aside, waiting for him.

Without paying any attention to Don Federico, the lawyer and the reporter began to walk out.

"I wish to talk with you a moment," said Don Federico, addressing himself to the young lawyer.

The reporter then left and the lawyer turned to the stranger with a wrinkled brow and an expression of great importance.

"I've been a teacher in Porto Rico," began Don Federico, when he was able to.

"Well, what about that?" demanded the young lawyer, impatiently.

"Please wait a minute," said Don Federico angrily, "give me a chance to speak."

"Go on then, I have only a minute."

"He was with me there for six months."

The lawyer became interested. "Yes?"

"Some of the papers claimed that he had committed several dastardly crimes since—"

"Oh, but that is entirely out of the question, he's being tried for the one crime."

"But the jury may have been prejudiced by these reports."

"The jury, my dear sir, will be instructed to consider nothing but the evidence that has been presented here. There is no dispute, you understand, as to whether he committed the crime or not. He confessed and his partner in crime confessed. What the prosecution is doing now is merely to corroborate these confessions with circumstantial evidence. His defense is

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insanity. If you have anything to offer in that direction, it may help him."

"I have."

"Then I'll tell you what you can do. Meet me at my office to-night at half-past eight. I'll be there and we can talk the matter over quietly. Here's my card."

The lawyer started off in a hurry, but Don Federico ran after him. "One minute, please. I want you to give me his mother's address."

Anxious to get rid of him, the lawyer pulled out an envelope, tore a piece off of it, wrote the address upon it, handed it to him, and dashed off.

Out on the street it began to snow again. Don Federico buttoned his coat, shoved his hands into his pockets and walked aimlessly for a long while, trying to wear off the horror that had set in upon him with the thought of facing Matilda; then, suddenly deciding that it was best to see her before dark, he followed the directions on the bit of old envelope, and came, half an hour later, before an old four-story tenement wedged in between two taller and newer tenements. The ground floor of this building was occupied by a dingy candy store the large window of which was covered by a veil of frost or steam. Towards the right of the little store a dilapidated door way with broken doors and battered transoms led to the interior of the tenement. He shoved one of these doors open, entered a very dirty vestibule, and lit a match. Both walls had dug into them the remnants of one-time letter boxes from which every brass door had been torn. Every box was loaded with dust and, in the queer shaky light of his match, each wall looked like the lower part of the skeleton of a giant head with every other tooth broken out. Not one letter-box had a name about it. Dwellers in tenements have no names. They exist only in their common capacity of the mob, and, like the pauper

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cemeteries which they fill, their living graves are nameless.

Don Federico crawled up the first flight of stairs hesitatingly, and rapped on the first door he reached.

"Who is there?" a woman replied without opening the door.

"How will I tell her who I am?" thought Don Federico, then answered her with another question, "Does Mrs. Henny live here?"

"I don't know," said the woman impatiently, and Don Federico could hear her walk away.

He rapped again. The woman returned and demanded again and with greater impatience, fairly yelling, "Who is there?"

"Will you please tell me where I can find the janitor?"

"In the candy-store," she growled and again walked away.

A wiry, one-armed man ran the candy-store. There was a gloomy expression upon his sharp yellow-skinned features when Don Federico entered, that even the prospect of selling some of his aged stock seemed unable to relieve. He was back of the reddish counter, throwing the scattered boys' books into a heap, and the dust he shook from each of them as he threw them upon the heap, filled his little store and settled down on the many red and green cardboard boxes on the shelves along the wall and on the glass show-case on the counter.

He nodded to the stranger indifferently.

"You're the janitor of this place?" asked Don Federico.

"Yes, sir."

"Can you tell me where Mrs. Henny lives?"

"What do you want Mrs. Henny for?"

"I don't think I can tell you that."

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"Well, she stays with me. I can't let her see everybody that wants to see her. She's been bothered more'n enough already, and she has plenty of trouble as it is."

"You are right about that. I am really very glad to hear you speak that way. I am a friend of Mrs. Henny and I'm sure that if you tell her who I am, she'll want to see me."

"Who are you, then?" asked the one-armed man, evincing a great deal of interest.

"You tell her a very old friend of hers, Fred, the fellow who worked for old Androon as bookkeeper over twenty years ago, before she was married."

The storekeeper had pulled a long twine which hung down over the shelves, and Don Federico heard a bell ring somewhere off in the rear.

A rather shabbily dressed little woman, with much care written over her pretty face, appeared in the elevated doorway at the rear of the narrow store and, without a question, took her place beside her husband and gazed at the stranger. Leaving his wife in the store, he went back to where she had been, and soon returned, and, eyeing Don Federico with great interest, told him that the old lady was anxious to see him and directed his wife to take the gentleman to her.

The winds howled and shrieked in Fred's soul and he shrank from the meeting about to be consummated. He followed the young woman, intoxicated with the conflict of his emotions, staggering through the dark-cluttered hallway, and stopping on the door sill of a gloomy room with its sepulchral atmosphere broken every moment by the faint distant groan that came from a heap in a corner.

What was left of the once pretty little shop girl lay bundled up on an old sofa near the window, and creeping through the dirty window pane, a bit of winter evening skylight fell upon her pale, ghostly-drawn

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face. The gloomy December day was ending. The tenement heights had long shut off the dying sun and a heavy sadness hung about in the shaft-like spaces between them.

Matilda turned her head and a smile broke across the ruins of her younger face. Fred, for some time afraid to go beyond the door, now started towards her, striking his hip against the edge of a clothless table, almost paralyzing the limb, but without stopping he approached her bedside and said softly and with a tremor, "Matilda!"

She slowly pulled from under the counterpane an emaciated hand and, offering it to him, murmured, the tears pouring out of her dilated eyes, "God sent you, Fred."

Fred drew a chair towards the sofa, pulled off his coat and sat down.

"God sent you," she began again.

Fred looked at her speechlessly. She was an old woman—she had lived sixty years in the twenty. Death was written all over her. The begrudged bit of skylight ran the lengths of her bony arm and hand and Fred saw the veins that lifted the skin from its bones. The machinery was hopelessly broken, only the faint dying light in her soul urged it on to its end.

She smiled at him pityingly. "God sent you, Fred. God must have sent you. I know that. How could it be otherwise. I have prayed for your coming, weeks and weeks and days, Fred. Why should you be coming in just now, when I need you. I know God sent you."

The idea enthused her. She grew restless, she couldn't lie still and attempted to rise, but fell back again; yet a new smile played upon her face that to Fred was like a great light illumining the regions of the memory. He saw the young Matilda clearly then.

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"I've prayed for this so long," she murmured. "God has sent you, Fred."

She placed her hand upon his knee and her wild eyes looked up into his face. She tried to speak but couldn't, and sobbed her prayers and grievances till Fred was all broken up and begged her to cease, to be reasonable and hopeful.

"Where have you been these many years?" she asked, trying to control herself, and before he could answer her she went off again, "God sent you, Fred. I know it. God is good, only his dreadful people are cruel and unforgiving. God will have mercy on my boy. He answered my one prayer, this is a sign to me that He has forgiven my boy. Oh, if I could tell him! Can you see him, Fred? I haven't been able to leave my bed for months. Do you think they torture him, Fred?"

"Oh, no," cried Fred. "They treat him very well —I know that."

"I was afraid they tortured him. My poor boy! If only I had the courage and the strength to go and see him. But I will have now. They'll have to let me go. God is sustaining me now. I have strength!"

"It is better for him, Matilda, that you don't go to see him."

"I suppose you've been blaming me for all of this, Fred. I knew you would. They all blame me."

"I knew nothing at all about this till a week after he left me."

"Left you?" cried Matilda.

"Yes, Carl was with me for about a year. I was in Porto Rico—"

"With you in Porto Rico?"

"Strange, wasn't it?"

"How does he know you?"

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"He doesn't know me. I didn't know him when he came to me."

Matilda seemed to be unable to understand the thing, and stopped a moment to find her way out of the confusion. Then suddenly, her sad face lighting up, she began to murmur to herself, "My boy will be all right now. I'm sure now, all right. Nothing else! Couldn't be! God sent him to you to get your help and to answer my prayer. It is so—it must be so —He will do something to save him—He's been helping him all along."

Fred gazed at her constantly, and every once in awhile she looked up at him as if her mind were struggling to make connections between the weak impressions made upon it. Night came down into the gloomy shafts, and the sickly lights from other tenement flats streamed in through the window.

"Perhaps I am to blame," she exclaimed suddenly after a few minutes of silence, "but God knows I'm not altogether to blame. I've done all that I could do. I sacrificed everything—everything I had to sacrifice. I failed! My boy is to be murdered. Do you think there is any chance for him?"

"Of course—" Fred began to say, but she interrupted him to continue the drone-like expression of that which was in her mind.

"He confessed, my poor, unhappy boy. He told them everything. Must they kill him? Can't they—can't anything be done? He was driven to it. He wanted to get some money, and get away from them. He wanted to take Anna and me away."

"Anna with you?" asked Fred softly.

"What would I have done without Anna. She stood by me."

Fred trembled, and struggled to keep the tremor out of his voice. "Has Anna any children?" he asked.

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"Anna never married."

"What has she been doing these many years?"

"Working."

"Working?"

"Working, yah! What else is there to do? Do you think they'll kill my boy?"

"Of course not, Matilda. We won't let them."

"I deserve it all," she cried, wringing her fleshless hands. "I knitted moccasins for other babies, and he ran about barefooted. I tell you this, Fred, they will not kill him alone! If they must kill, they'll kill me too. Fred, my God! They'll take my boy out like an animal and kill him! Is it possible, Fred? And we just sit around and do nothing? We must do something Fred."

"Of course we will, Matilda. See how you work yourself up like that. You must be strong or you can't help him. I'm already working with his lawyer. There are a thousand things we can do."

"I brought him into the world! Oh God, to have the little bundle in my arms again. Those feverish cheeks, Fred. I put him up on my shoulder. His cheeks were burning with fever. The little thing pressed his little head against my neck, and I had my cheeks right against his cheeks and cooled them for him."

She burst into a fit of crying, and Fred made no attempt to stop her. He sat back in his seat and listened to her sobbing. The sobbing subsided, and finally died out. He was horrified. He was afraid she was dead. Striking a match nervously, he lit the gas. She was asleep. He took her two devoured arms, and gently put them back under the quilt.

An old picture, somewhat yellow with age, hung on one of the walls. Fred stepped up to it and examined it. It was the only picture in the room, and

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was the portrait of a young man with a high forehead. It hung crookedly, and between the glass, and the print, were drifts of dust. Fred thought the picture might be Matilda's, and studied it to see whether it was familiar to him or not, finding that it was not familiar, he pulled it straight, turned about, and paced the floor. A feeling of the presence of some one made him look up, and as he did, he saw a woman in the doorway. He stared at her and she stared back at him. Her face was bloodless. Her cheeks were sunken, her forehead wrinkled, and beneath her brown, wet eyes were ugly black streaks. Her hair, done up on top of her head, from which she had just pulled her hat, was sliding down. Her black clothes were threadbare, torn in several conspicuous places, and somewhat too large for her. Her wet, piercing eyes stared almost defiantly at him, and her trembling lips betrayed the utter lack of defiance. She leaned against the door frame as if she hadn't the strength to stand with. He thought she might fall, and walked to her.

His heart went out to her. He saw things, and life differently now. Through her piercing eyes, he saw the hungry soul. It captivated him and he saw nothing else.

"Anna," he muttered barely audibly and extended his hand.

She gave him her work-worn hand and he kissed it.

The tears welled up over the piercing, brown pupils, and Fred put a hand on her shoulder. The youth in him that had loved beautiful, soft clothes and beautiful, healthy features, had died long ago. What love there was in his soul now, simmered for his fellow-men. To him, this wreck of the woman he had known, with the melancholy story of a life of toil and struggle pouring out of her eyes, and over her form, this girl in whom hope and desire had been murdered, who

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without joy or sunshine, without rest or satisfaction, had plodded on by the side of her friend throughout weary years of night, this unadorned being who knew all the avenues and the byways of adversity, who had suffered the tortures of want and the agonies of blackest disappointment and despair, was the embodiment of the universal song, the song of life groping upward, falling and bleeding over the jagged points enveloped by ignorance. That song of sorrow and toil he had sung, and his intense love for the sad music of it made him capable of embracing and kissing the dirty little negro children in Porto Rico, and it made him now see this woman wreck, as he was incapable of seeing her before. He spoke to her softly, and some of the words choked him as he spoke. She answered softly, her voice loaded down with sadness, and modulated by despair and a kind of resignation.

They sat down near the prostrate form of Matilda and talked of her and Carl. Fred told her that she must not go back to the shop any more, that they would remain in the city while they were fighting for Carl and that afterwards he would take both of them to his farm in the Catskills, where they could stay as long as they wanted to, and Anna smiled.

She worked for Denelli, she told him, having left Donald's shop immediately after the death of Androon. She told him all she knew about Denelli, Donald, Androon, and Carl; and then asked him to stay for supper, promising to make it ready in a few minutes; but he told her that he had an appointment with Carl's lawyer, and took his leave, promising to come on the morrow, after court.

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CHAPTER IV.

What influence in a ten-dollar bill! When Fred presented himself at the doors of the court-room next morning, he found that an organic change had taken place in the personality of the guard. He had become most amiable, and much too considerate. Fred desired to go in, but the crowd near the door was so thick, he couldn't get through. Instantly upon perceiving him, the guard grabbed one of the "idlers" in the crowd, and with him shoved the rest of the people back, just as he had done with Fred but the day before, when the ten dollar bill had not yet been called upon for aid. This was done for Fred's benefit, and it disgusted him, but he was in no physical or mental condition to convert his feelings into any kind of action. Without responding to the guard's nod, he walked into the court-room, and hastened to find himself a good seat. Only a very few had got ahead of him. There were still seats enough to choose from, and he chose one nearest to where he knew Carl would sit.

He sat like one in a trance, gazing at the unoccupied chair on which the prisoner had sat the day before and at the dust-laden, dark-red canopy over the judges seat. He was conscious of the need of making a desperate fight, conscious of having returned to an old world, and having awakened there, ghosts that had haunted his memory, and conscious of having departed from a world that was much more sunlit than the old world, and that in spite of its sunshine, and contentment, was growing remote in his mind. The burden upon him was almost unendurable—it was stupifying. In the long years of tropical life he had lost most of his energy, and the enervating winter to which he was

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unused, sapped at the little strength left in him. It was hard for him to stir, and yet he had been called upon to do battle in a titanic struggle.

The court-room filled again. The judge was announced, and appeared in his wing-like robe, rustling with dignity. Mechanically every one rose in respect. It mattered little whether that respect existed in the minds of the individuals who stood up or not. The judge and those whom he represented, were content with the show of respect. So there were other vital facts that mattered not. Justice itself might be nonexistent, for all they cared who ran the formality of justice. This fact is not wanted, and that fact is barred, because legal formalities established a thousand years ago, refuse to change with all the other changes, because men strive to hold back the tide of evolution and betterment. According to formula and ceremony they hear evidence, they who run the machine of justice, and according to formula and ceremony, they do their judging, condemning, and executing, and then return to their meals.

At times the judge or the district attorney jested, and the audience laughed. But to those immediately concerned, there was nothing laughable.

There wasn't a kind-hearted man in the whole audience to fire a bullet into the victim's brain, so that if he must pay the dreadful penalty, he might die even as his own victim had died, without brutally-stretched hours of misery and dread. Society claims the desire of an eye for an eye, but it is so steeped in the love of usury that an eye to it, is not enough for an eye. For every eye, it demands a thousand times the area of an eye, cutting it from the living flesh. Androon, the leech, had fed upon human souls, and had filled his belly with the blood of youth. During the lapse of a moment, while his consciousness had been robbed of

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feeling by a semi-torpor, the torpor of a sot, Carl had robbed him of his life. Androon, whose life had been rich, and full to o'erflowing, had been sixty years old when he died. No matter how little the harm his drinking could have done him, he had had at most but twenty years more to live. What hopes of life he had ever had, had been realized in the sixty years. The twenty would have been but an hour of drunken senility. Carl was twenty years old. Before him still stretched the possible sixty. His twenty years had been twenty years of struggle and misery. What hope he had had was yet to be realized in the sixty years before him. What a rate of interest society demanded from him. It was the demand of a soul, a head, a body, limbs, hopes, desires, all that there could be for an eye.

For more than an hour, the night before, Fred had struggled with the lawyer for the defense in the hope that of all he felt he had to offer, something might be of value to him in his plea to the jury; but the young counselor knew the magic formula, against which reason was impotent.

"But he had no chance. Born in poverty—"

"No need of explaining all that, the law does not concern itself with his chance."

"But the society that denied him the chance to grow right, created the law."

"He can be prosecuted and defended only according to that law, who created it, or when it was created, notwithstanding."

"Then the State is determined to kill him?"

"The State wishes to give him a fair trial."

"But how can your trial be fair when you have already arranged beforehand, what you are going to hear and what you are not going to hear. You all know he has committed the crime, why wait? Why

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not kill him at once, and save him all the hours of agony?"

"The law must take its course."

"You are merely preparing him with ceremonies so that you may ceremoniously kill him?"

The indifferent, monotonous buzzing became unbearable to Fred. The District Attorney was sorting papers, and tabulating them. The jury was bored, stared all over the room, and yawned. The judge was bored, and the audience was bored, while Carl dreamed. Suddenly the District Attorney ceased working among his papers, and going to the little gate in the bar, called for another witness. "George Brown, alias George Willis."

The court waited a few minutes. The District Attorney grew impatient going to the bar again, he called out loud and reverberantly, "George Brown."

At the second call of the name he knew, Carl jumped from the phonographic horn where he had been in Porto Rico listening to his cello solo, and the newspaper reporters crouched before him like tigers, saw the disturbance on his face, and began to write hurriedly.

The heart of the brave audience stood still. The door had been thrown open. The witness was a prisoner, a refractory prisoner, unwilling to serve the state he hated, and fairly dragged in by the guards.

He reached the witness box and trembled. Carl stared at him devouringly. Poor George! From his lips and cheeks had departed the last trace of the crimson Carl remembered having seen, and loved to see there. The beloved face was marked with evidences of torture, and Carl was the only one that read the signs straight. It was not George any more. It was his death mask, and his corpse. It was the remains of the

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George he had seen in the old Spanish Castle, beaten to death.

The prisoner witness stood near the witness-stand, and gazed terror-stricken at the prisoner at bar, and the prisoner at bar gazed back at him. Oh, for a single moment for explanations!

The witness was offered a Bible, but he refused to place his hand upon it. His pale lips trembling, anger, savage, murderous anger flashing from his eyes, he turned to the ugly guard, "I don't want the damn thing. It's never done me any good, and it's always helpin' you out."

The court and spectators were horrified.

One guard lifted the witness' hand, while a second guard blabbered forth a string of unintelligible words. He was then ordered to be seated, and because he had been confined for days and weeks in a hideous dungeon, where he could neither sit nor lie down, he sank into the chair.

"Mr. Brown," began the District Attorney, amiably, "on the night of—"

"Don't Mister me," muttered the prisoner witness, "I told you I'm not goin' to tell you anything. I'm not going to give you a 'lift' in killing him."

The District Attorney fumed. He threatened him with all the horrors the penitentiary could inflict, but all to no avail. After a quarter of an hour of rangling the calcitrant witness was taken from the court-room.

The District Attorney wiped his brow, and introduced the records of evidence that had sent George to the penitentiary for life. Carl heard none of it. Before his eyes like passing clouds went the shifting scenes of his Porto Rican dream, and he saw the lashes come down without mercy upon the bleeding back. Every few minutes he was on the verge of rising and fighting for his comrade and always the hor-

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rors of the plight he was in, came back to him in time, to convince him of the futility of rising or fighting.

The people listened to the records, and the reporters made notes of the most important points. Everybody saw the connections between the defendent's confession, and that record of evidence, and everybody shook his head and condemned him, forgetting the admonishment of the Christ they worshiped, not to judge and not to condemn. Some in the magnanimity of their sense of justice expressed to each other, in whispers, that both were guilty, and that if one gets the chair, both ought to get it.

Court adjourned, and then reconvened at two o'clock. There were still more records to read. Again the judge and jury and audience were bored, and every one except the prisoner was lounging about in his seat. The jury seemed to be asleep. The judge had a friend with him under the canopy, and was conversing with him, and both men laughed constantly as they talked.

Fred kept his eyes on the jury. They were such a queer combination of tall and short and fat and thin individuals. He tried to read their faces.

"I hope I'm mistaken," he said to himself, "but I am afraid there is little to be expected from that jury. Look at that fat beast over there. He has been gourmandising all his life. What can he know of hunger and want and desperation? And that thin, wiry little fellow in the foreman's seat. He has been edging his way through the years. He has shoved his diminutive person into success. It was possible for him to lead an uprighteous life, it must be possible for everybody. How will he view the plea that the prisoner had no chance? Look at them all! Look at their faces! Go plead and beg before a jury of meat-eaters for the life of an ox!"

Fred had not slept through a whole night in a

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month. His weak eyes grew dim, and the colored reflections before him turned to shadows. The court-room stretched out into a long dark corridor. Beyond the further end of that corridor was an abyss and darkness—death. He saw the jury, the judge, the over-zealous District Attorney, the lawyers and their assistants, and the spectators—one by one, he saw them rise from their seats, and tremblingly start for the corridor. The ambition, the gladness, the assuredness on their faces faded like color in the evening sky. Like children their toys, they dropped all they had been holding on to, and facing the further end groped sadly with eyes half shut, hearkening to the call, but going without will.

What will the judge be thinking, when his last moment comes? What will the fat and the thin, the tall and the short jurors be thinking when death commands them to drop everything so sacred to them now?

There comes a moment when bitter, revengeful minds cease plotting vengeance! when wise men become ignorant! when those who have been judging and condemning, pray for mercy! when the short-sighted who see but themselves and their own welfare, feel the common woe of existence! when the hands that threw stones, fall limply and grow cold!

All the night before Fred had promised himself, that when court adjourned again, he would ask for permission to speak to the defendent. As the moment for adjournment approached, fear seized him. What will he say to him? What will he ask? What consolation can he offer? How can he talk to him with the guards standing about? When the jury was sent out and the doors were thrown open he rushed from the court-room.

He found the one-armed candy-store keeper leaning against his counter, and quarreling with his wife, who

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sat holding her baby on her lap, and looked as if she had been crying. They stopped quarreling as soon as he entered, and turning to Fred, the man wished to know how the case was progressing.

"They introduced a lot of evidence to-day that I'm afraid will go very strongly against him," said Fred in a whisper, and looked towards the rear.

"She's asleep," said the storekeeper's wife.

"They're going to kill him, I guess," said the storekeeper, "that's about all there is to it."

"For heaven's sakes, what's the matter with you?" cried the pretty little woman, staring fiercely at him.

"What's the difference how you say it?" he demanded, "ain't it so?"

"Well, you needn't talk like that!"

"I tell you with things as they are y'might as well be dead. You are better off dead than worryin' every day of y'r life about gettin' enough to buy bread with."

They were silent awhile, and each one having selected some particular spot, stared at it.

"Business is rotten," went on the storekeeper, "wish the devil I'd never seen the rotten place."

"You don't do well here?" asked Fred.

"Couldn't do much worse, I guess. If things go on like this, I'll just have to close up, and go to the devil."

"What is the matter?"

"Neighborhood's no good. A fellow opened a store a few blocks away, and they've all gone off there. Look! this is the way I stand around all day. No one comes in at all, exceptin' to ask for what I haven't got. With this arm clipped off by the press a week after I was married, what could I do. If I could 'a stayed at my trade, I'd be all right. I'd be makin' a decent livin'."

"An' much of a decent living you can have with a working-man," said his wife, trying to hurt his feel-

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ings in retaliation for some unpleasant thing he had said before Fred had arrived.

"I made a darn side decent enough living for m'self," he retorted, "but I had to go like a damn fool, and get married."

"Look here, Jim Daniels," cried the enraged young wife, rising with her baby from the chair, "if I hear that again I'll just take my baby, and go, I don't care where to. I've had nothing but trouble from the day I married you. When did you get me a decent dress even? I wish you hadn't married me. Maybe I wouldn't be such an old servant girl as I am, working my finger-nails off for nothing."

"Nothing?"

"Yes, nothing! I've had nothing but work. I haven't even a decent dress, and you know, Jim Daniels, that I had that much when you came and was so anxious to marry me."

With the last remark she rushed back into the corridor as if she wanted to avoid hearing what he might say in reply, and Jim Daniels, regretting the quarrel, turned to Fred, and began to explain matters.

"I suppose I had no right to say that to her, but I didn't mean that she was to blame any. She knows how hard it is for me to make anything here, and all the time she's askin' me for somethin' else. Now she needs a coat. Last week it was somethin' else. What am I goin' to do? I tell you I just about make m'rent. The cuttin' off of this arm put me over m' head in debt. The shop went up the flue, and here I was left, with one arm, two months in the hospital, board for her, no job—wouldn't I been better off if I hadn't gone and married? I borried the hundred dollars that paid for this dinky place from m'uncle and he's botherin' the life out of me for it, every time I see him."

"Is Mrs. Henny paying you for staying here?"

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"Well, Anna's the only one that works, you know. They came to me six or seven months ago, I met them on the street one day, they came when Androon had just been killed. Both of them, by God, just went to pieces. I used to know 'em when I was a kid. Me an' Carl used to play together. Old Mrs. Valey had this here place then, Carl an' I used to come in here, and read books, an'—poor Carl. Well, as I was goin' to say, they had a little money and paid me for a while, then that ran out, and they paid me nothing. They don't eat much, but they got t'have something, and everything costs like the devil. Anna got work after that, but they can't pay me much, y'know."

"They haven't paid you yet for the time when Anna wasn't working."

"No, I s'pose I never will get it."

"How much do they owe you?"

"Well, I'd take thirty dollars, and call it square. That would just help me out. I could get her coat, and get in a new line of candy that the kids like. That's what they're goin' off to the other fellow for."

Fred pulled out his bank-book and wrote out a check for thirty dollars, and giving it to him, said, "Tell them that I paid that, will you, so they won't be worrying about what they owe you."

Jim Daniels was glad to get the check, but he could have kicked himself, as he later expressed himself to his wife, for not having made the bill much higher.

"I wonder whether Mrs. Henny is still sleeping?" asked Fred.

"You wait here an' I'll go see," said Jim, glad to get the opportunity of going to Minnie with the good news, and of making up for what he had said to her, by giving her the amount she wanted for a coat.

Matilda claimed not to have been sleeping at all, and Fred went back to see her. Her hair was dis-

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heveled, her cheeks were streaked with ugly red marks, and her eyes showed that she had been sleeping, still she insisted that she hadn't slept a wink.

He had planned to speak very optimistically to her, but as he sat there before her, it seemed to him that she was beyond understanding him, that she was but partially alive. She didn't talk as much as she talked the day before. She seemed to have lost faith in the theories she had been so enthusiastic about. Most of the time she lay silent and motionless.

"When we get Carl out of this," said Fred, gazing at her intently to see what effect his remarks would have, "I'm going to take you and Anna out to the Catskills with me."

"You better bury me before you go," she replied.

Somewhat later Fred asked her why Anna had gone to work since he had told her not to.

"Who'll support her family, if she doesn't work?" asked Matilda in response.

"But I told her I'd take care of her. I wanted her to rest a bit. She's worn out."

"You're too late Fred," said Matilda without moving from her position, "too late! too late!"

Again she started in a rambling talk about what God was going to do for her, and he sat listening to her till Anna came home.

Anna explained that she was working by the week, and wanted to complete that week's work, and then helped Minnie prepare the evening meal.

Preparations for supper having been completed, they were about to gather about the table, when Matilda burst into a fit of crying and sobbing. Fred talked to her, and Anna put her arms about her, but it was useless. She sobbed and sobbed and wailed, and nothing could stop her. Anna put cold water to her forehead, and covered her well with blankets.

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Jim was the only one who could eat and he ate without appetite, and ate silently. Matilda's sobbing subsided a bit and then she grew quiet, sending forth every now and then some heart-rending remark from her restless sleep.

Anna insisted on Fred's going to eat, and he went because he felt he ought to.

They sat about the table without eating, merely playing with the food before them. Fred felt that he ought to say something, but it was just impossible for him to utter a sound. Anna sat opposite him, and after having mashed some potatoes on her plate, stared at them, her eyes filling up with tears. Fred watched her, and grew alarmed. Suddenly he saw her head drop upon her bosom, and he and Minnie rushed to her. They revived her with some cold water, and she told them in frightfully weak voice that she was very sick. The information was superfluous. They fixed up a bed on chairs for her, and administered to her wants.

Jim went back to his store, and Fred helped Minnie wash the dishes. Minnie refused to allow him to help her at first, but Fred told her that he'd go crazy if he didn't have something to do and Minnie finally consented.

Anna was soon asleep, and Fred and Minnie conversed in low tones. Minnie described in detail the horrors of the last few weeks, and said that she had really begun to fear her own thoughts, and questioned Fred about the different symptoms of her mental conditions which worried her. Through with the dishes, they sat down at the table, and Minnie began to tell Fred of her own relations to Carl.

"There was a table here, where this one is," she said, "and that old sofa there was here then too, it belonged to Mrs. Valey. We used to come here almost

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every night. What happy kids we were when we were here. That picture is a picture of poor Mrs. Valey's brother. He had to go to some war as a soldier, and was killed. She always cried about him, poor old soul, and now it's years already since she's dead too. I don't know what got into poor Carl, and made him do those things. Everybody says the reform-school ruined him. He was a lovely boy before he went there."

Minnie was interrupted by a pathetic sigh from Matilda. They sat silently awhile after that, then Minnie offered more reminiscences, and Fred saw the tears roll down her pretty face.

Jim closed his store, and came back. Leaving a message for Anna, Fred went out into the gloomy night to wander about for hours in the hope of forcing a bit of drowsiness upon his agitated brain.

CHAPTER V.

The following Friday afternoon, court adjourned with the final appeal of counsel for the defense. The young lawyer had done his best. He had made a strong appeal to the jury, but strong as it had been in words, it was weak in spirit. The lawyer believed in the guilt of his client, and believed in the penalty he was sure was going to be inflicted. His plea to the jury was not for the life of the boy, but for the fee the State was to give him. Had society given him the coveted chance to be hangman, he would have fought more vehemently on the other side. The State had employed experts to prove that the man had been sane and sufficiently well-balanced to have known that he was doing wrong, and the defense had, with less money, employed a poorer expert to prove that the

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man was insane at the time he committed the crime. The jury, whose pathological knowledge was nil, was to decide which of the experts told the truth or knew what he was talking about. For inexplicable reasons, the judge had decided to make his charge to the jury on the following Monday. Carl went back to his cell to wait for Monday, and Fred, more hopeless than he had been at any time during the week, decided to find Professor Guano, and elicit his aid and advice.

He arrived upon Columbia Heights early next morning, and in spite of his consuming anxiety and nerve-wrecking impatience to learn of the Professor's whereabouts, and to get to him, he stopped a moment before the beautiful library, between the two great fountains, lost in retrospection. In every direction were evidences of the eternal change of all things. Great white stone buildings had supplanted lesser buildings, and to Fred, young and strong as they seemed towering higher than the tallest of the poplars interspersed among them, every stone in their make-up had a voice and every voice told the tale, "this too shall pass away." He turned as he reached the crest of the rise of steps, and gazed at the two fountains, standing like living things at either side of the approach. Gracefully the water still played in the light, and the stone floor they had sprayed was still wet. No other thing on the campus seemed to have been so permanent —it was like gazing at the silent, smiling sphinx. He turned and hurried into the library, and as he went there flashed hazily across his mind, the silhouette figures of his savage class-mates, striking down the fleeing freshman, and as he opened the door he thought, "I wonder what has happened to all of them these many years?"

A woman in the library sent him to some official in the registration building, and there he was sent to

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one of the professors in the law school, who, when after an hour's searching, he had found him, said that Professor Guano had, years ago, moved out upon a little farm in New Jersey. He couldn't tell him how to get there, but he gave him the name of the village, and with that information Fred rushed away for the railroad station.

He arrived at the little village on the sea-shore after an hour's tedious ride, and found the little town cold and deserted. The houses were mostly houses belonging to summer resorters, and were closed for the winter. The wind tore through the lifeless streets and occasionally lifted some of the snow that lay in solid, hard drifts in the gutters. A quarter of an hour's walk brought him to another section of the hamlet, where lived the natives. A wagon passed, driven by a man bundled up in a huge fur coat, but he was going too rapidly, and Fred did not care to stop him. The one road street of this part of the town was deserted as was the sea side, but one could see by the appearance of the houses, and the smoke that rose from them that people lived there.

He came upon a small building, on the store window of which hung an age-worn sign "POST OFFICE." Here Fred entered, and found a good-natured elderly man in charge. He informed him that Mr. Guano did not get his mail through his Post Office, but he had a faint idea where Mr. Guano's farm was, and directed him to it.

Fred wandered about from road to road, and house to house, till he found one man who knew the way to the secluded farm of the one time professor, and Fred started willingly upon the directions offered. He walked down a long, sandy road until he came to a great extensive forest. Between this deep blue purple stretch, and a white sandy peach orchard was a white

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sand path, and this he took. The path turned into the leafless woods, and fully half an hour he saw no indications of human life.

Finally he broke out into the open again, and saw before him in the midst of acres of dead, berry stalks a cluster of small buildings with a background of more deep blue purple. From the directions and descriptions given him he knew that he had arrived at his destination, and he quickened his pace. He cut across the berry patch between rows of withered berry thorns, and arrived at the woodshed, where he heard a man sawing wood. A white dachshund, chained to his kennel, had been asleep. Suddenly he burst into a fit of barking, and the man stopped sawing his wood, and came out of the shed, saw in hand, to investigate.

Fred approached him. He began his question, but didn't finish it. He saw in the weather-beaten face, traces of the face he was seeking, and found it needless to put his question. The weather-beaten face, older and very much changed, still had the sunken eye sockets, and the penetrating eyes, and as those eyes gazed curiously at him, Fred smiled.

"I thought so," said Professor Guano, softly, shaking his head and smiling.

They shook hands, made futile attempts to express their emotions, and went into the house. In the typical country sitting-room was a large fire-place a-blazing, and in the small kitchen next to it, the stove was red hot. The little sitting-room was a very cozy little place, but there was a carelessness about everything that was depressing. The table was cluttered with unwashed dishes, the sofa had a heap of blankets and a pillow on it, and a glimpse into the kitchen showed how very disorderly things had recently been run. Professor Guano pulled two old-fashioned country rockers to the fire-place, and sat down in one of them,

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throwing his hat down on the floor as if he had been born and brought up a farmer.

With his hat off, the professor resembled more closely the picture Fred had carried about with him in his mind, but the change, too, was more obvious. An uneasy feeling possessed Fred as he sat and gazed at the professor while he was replenishing the fire in the fire-place. It seemed to him that he could read in the melancholy face, that some calamity had recently befallen him. Hardly had the thought assumed shape in his mind, when the professor sat back in his seat, and said somewhat painfully, "Don't mind the condition of the place, my wife died two weeks ago, and left me to do my own housework."

The professor spoke slowly, telling of the departure of his wife and comrade, and gazed into the fireplace as he talked. The burning wood crackled, and the winter sun broke through the windows, clear and golden to the rag-carpeted floor. Fred's heart went out to the dear old man, who talked of his grief as a poet might sing of it.

"Professor Guano," he said, "you're fortunate in having had such a comrade, think of us, who have always been alone."

They went on for some time, talking of comradship and friendship, and then the professor wished Fred to tell him in every detail, of his "wonderful experiences," but Fred asked him to wait for some other time with that, and at once began to lay before him, the purpose of his visit.

Professor Guano received two of the New York Dailies, and knew every detail of the case. His face darkened as Fred went on telling of his connections. He was visibly affected. His sad face grew sadder, and every once in a while he would look up at him

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horrified. He listened attentively to everything he had to say till Fred was exhausted.

"I don't know what to say to you, my boy," he then replied, "I'm afraid it's a very hopeless case. I don't know why I should have followed it as closely as I did. I usually refrain from reading murder trials. I did follow the details in this case, and as I said, I fear there's absolutely no hope for him whatever, unless you should interest the Governor, and I doubt, doubt very much, whether you could move him an inch. It is all so plain. Not only did he confess, but his friend confessed long before he did, and the two confessions corroborate each other. The State has built its case strong."

They were silent for awhile. Professor Guano put more wood upon the fire.

"Suppose we appeal for another trial?" asked Fred.

"What for?"

"We might get a better lawyer."

"No lawyer could do any better now. From what I read there was no trace whatever of insanity in the family as far back as they've been able to go. The few ridiculous things the lawyer offered amounted to nothing. You know he wasn't insane, and I know he wasn't insane, and on what facts you have, no jury will ever forgive him for the act. That's the trouble here. I never heard of a more hopeless case. If he hadn't confessed, there might have been doubt as to whether he committed the crime or not; but his confession, and the mass of circumstantial evidence that the State piled up, has left no opening for the finest kind of a wedge."

"Then we simply must sit around, and wait till the State butchers him."

"I don't see what we can do."

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"Don't you think we ought to appeal the case anyway, and give him another year?"

"If there was the slightest chance of getting a reversal, I would say, yes; but there isn't, and all you'll be doing is to give him another year of agony and torture yourself for another year. If his mother has to wait around a whole year, and should then have to go through what she is suffering now, it will surely kill her. As it is, she might get over it. Besides, do you know what it costs to make an appeal?"

"I don't know just what it would cost, but I have a little money that I am willing to use."

"It would cost an enormous sum. You'll lose your money, and you'll get nothing out of it. Rich men have spent enormous fortunes on better-looking cases."

They talked and argued on that point for hours. Supper time came, and Fred helped him make it, and they talked and argued as they worked. Neither of the men ate much at the table, and after supper they continued the argument. Professor Guano saw that Fred was very much affected by the discussion, and made him promise that he would say no more about it till next morning, then begged him to tell him his experiences. Professor Guano asked him question after question about where he had been, and what he had done, but Fred answered in the very shortest sentences, and finally, unable to endure talking further, he turned to the professor, and told him so.

"I know what we will do," said Professor Guano rising, "let's go for a walk."

Fred expressed his willingness to go, and putting on their over-coats, they started out. The wind had subsided. The night was cold and clear. Professor Guano seemed to have been inspired with a new interest in his neighborhood, and told Fred everything he knew about his neighbors. Here is a poor woman

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who lost an eighteen-year-old daughter, a beautiful, thoughtful girl, with a promising future, before her; over there a young husband, the father of two little children, had been killed by a runaway horse; and in a third place a young man, who had been kicked, had developed cancer, and awaited death momentarily. The rapidity with which these stories followed each other, made Fred doubt their veracity, but strange to say, the stories in themselves had quite the effect upon him that it was intended that they should have.

Fred grew tired, and wished to go back, but Professor Guano told him softly that the lesson he was giving him was not yet complete, and insisted on his going further. They came to a little cemetery, and Professor Guano started for the little gateway.

"Where are you going, Professor Guano?" cried Fred.

"Are you afraid?"

"No, I'm not exactly afraid, but—"

Professor Guano took him by the arm, and Fred knew that the sunken sockets were wet.

They came to a newly-made grave, and silently sat down. Professor Guano pulled out his handkerchief, and wiped his eyes.

"Two weeks ago, she was with me, as you are with me now. My dear boy, if such as she have to go, I have no fear to go, nor the desire to stay forever. It is only our ignorance that makes us fear death. I have no more fear right here in this little hamlet of death, than I have at my own fireside. I miss her, that is all. I would like to have her with me, and should have liked that we go together, but death itself is no uglier to me, than birth. Both are chapters in the story of life. One is the beginning, the other is the end. You must have faith in Nature and in the great force of the universe. Nothing in our whole range of experience

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shows any stupidity on the part of Nature, everything shows great wisdom and beauty—are you foolish enough to think that this beautiful universal force is so stupid as to put a lot of us here to no purpose? It is true that the sudden killing of a young man, healthy—and with a long life before him is horrible; but those who are killing him, are merely bringing upon him an end that must come anyway, and are smearing their own names and their own hearts with the stigma of savagery. Posterity will look upon them as a lot of savages. I regret more the misery he has had to endure throughout his life, than I do the death they will inflict upon him, the death that will end that misery for him. They read his life into the evidence as something against him—the fools—I read it as something against us, the rest of us, all of us are responsible for it. Listen, my boy, I hate to say it, because I fear you will misunderstand me; but I sometimes think, considering all the sorrow they heaped upon him throughout his life, that the infliction of death is a benevolence on their part. See how he went from one institution to another, he was always in trouble, and I fear would always be in trouble, with such a beginning."

"I protest there, Professor Guano, he was with me in Porto Rico for some seven months. I am convinced that he could have become a beautiful character."

"Yes, that may be; but how much of that, do you think, was due to his having been under the weight of so great a fear? But besides all that. You want to be kind to him? Do you want to inflict him with a life of abject slavery? You know what our prisons are. Do you want to give him years of torture and agony so that you can hold off his going back to the elements—"

"Oh, it's terrible, Professor Guano!"

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"Yes, it is. We promised not to talk about it any more to-night."

They reached the house. Professor Guano carried in an armful of wood, and Fred followed him with another armful. They rebuilt the fire in the fireplace, and sat silently rocking themselves.

"Do you feel like going to bed?"

"Oh, no," cried Fred, "I couldn't sleep."

"Would you like to hear some good music?"

"I was just going to say, I wish I had my phonograph."

"I have no phonograph, but I have been practising on the piano again, these last five or six years, and if you like piano music, I'll be glad to play for you."

"I didn't know you played the piano."

"I took my first lesson when I was eight years old, and I've been practically playing ever since. Of course I couldn't play very much when I lectured at Columbia—"

"Too busy with houses, and mortgages."

Professor Guano laughed, "Yes, I was glad enough to forget about them."

They went out again to bring in a few logs. The professor lit a fire in the parlor fire-place, and Fred continued bringing in more wood. When the flames were licking and roaring, Professor Guano brought a kerosine lamp one side of which was shaded, and placed it so it threw its light upon his music and warming his hands, he began to run over the key-board, and the scales and finger exercises, he played to limber up his fingers, already brought the tears to Fred's eyes.

The Professor played a Chopin prelude.

"Do you know that?"

"Do *I know* that? Oh, you don't know what pictures that brings to my mind."

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"I know what pictures it brings to my mind, tell me about yours."

Fred began to tell him. "I worked in a hotel in Florida. A young man stopped there the first winter. The young man would play while I worked, and the music would overpower me, so I couldn't continue working. The young man would play for me evenings. No one at the hotel liked him. Some liked his playing. I lost track of him, and suppose I shall never hear of him again. But go on and play, Professor Guano, I can't bear my own voice. I feel as though you're robbing me when you make me talk. Play, for God's sake, play. There's nothing under the heavens to equal that—"

The Professor's heavy fingers fluttered over the keys. He played other preludes, he played some of Chopin waltzes, he played Tchaikowsky, Beethoven, and a Mozart Concerto. Then he played something Fred had never heard before. And the hours moved, and the night waned. The Professor wanted to stop, "it is time to go to bed."

"No, for God's sake, play some more."

Fred replenished the fire, and the Professor continued playing.

The professor stopped to rest his hands. They talked of music. It was the only thing in life worth while, they both agreed. It was the universal language, it was the expression of everything one ever thought, it was the rain and the sunshine of the soul; and as they talked there was rain and sunshine. Their eyes glistened, and their faces beamed.

"Oh, I must play this for you," cried the Professor, thinking of something he had but recently learned.

Fred thought as much of it as he did, and asked him to play it again. He was obliged to play it still

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again and then he played something else. He kept on playing, and Fred fed the fire, the fire of the hearth, and the fire of his soul.

"But don't you think it's time to go to bed now?"

A cock was heard crowing in the distance, and his call sounded forth into the night, like a single ray of purple sunlight piercing dark evening clouds. Others in further distances, sweet with the sweetness of nature, answered him.

"Professor Guano, I'm keeping you up."

"If that's all that bothers you, I can go on."

"Go on then, please, I wouldn't close an eye for hours yet."

He played on till they felt the dawn coming, then he closed the piano, and putting on their overcoats, they went out to see it come over the light blue mass of leafless trees.

It broke silvery in the eastern sky and shadows turned purple.

"Think of it, this is the time they take a man out and—"

"Yah!"

They slept all day. Towards evening they spent an hour sawing wood, and then brought most of it into the little parlor, where they laid it up for the coming night. Professor Guano played all that night. Towards the second dawn they went to bed, and ten o'clock Monday morning, Fred started back to New York.

CHAPTER VI.

The judge's charge to the jury was short, and the jury's deliberation was shorter still. At three o'clock Monday afternoon the jury filed back into the court-room, and with the proper, painful formalities, the wiry little foreman read the verdict, "Guilty!"

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The victim was forced to rise, and as he rose, he felt the death straps being fastened to him, and as the death straps were being fastened to him, the judge's kindly voice thanked the jury for its services to humanity, thanked them who could not look their victim in the eyes. The jury felt relieved by the judge's appreciation, and throwing the responsibility of killing a man upon the shoulders of the society that paid the judge and the hangman, they fled to their homes and their children.

Fred had expected that verdict, yet when it came, he rushed out of the court-room and wandered about for hours, terrified and bewildered.

He came upon the Brooklyn Bridge, and in the hope of escaping the maddening crowds, he started across it. He walked all the way across without knowing where he was going to, then turned and started back again. The sun kissing the bay, lit red the towering tributes of trade, and brought down upon earth the sadness of a winter evening. The red in the sun turned black. Life went out! Every shadow assumed the form of a chair. The electric lights struggling with the darkness became the "test" lights. Every man that passed him was a uniformed officer about to perform his horrible duty, about to strap a living man to a burning chair, about to feed a human soul with hopes and desires, into the maw of a mechanical monster. The glassy cold river below became a bed of lime.

An impulse seized him, he *must* hurry to the side of the condemned mother. He must go—that was his share of the doom!

Three days later, the victim was taken again from his grave. Carl was brought into the court-room to be sentenced. He stood facing the Law and the Court, his bloodless hands gripping the bar of justice. Two

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guards stood by to *protect* him.

"Is there anything you wish to say why sentence should not be passed upon you?" asked the judge as he had asked that question a thousand times before—just as he kept his head at a certain angle when he spoke day after day—just as he rustled his robe every time he entered—just as he took his cup of coffee every morning. It was a habit, a part of the comedy program, and he meant nothing by it.

Carl's weakening brain was on fire. Before him, and about him in every perception, he saw the mocking figure of death. His whole consciousness was a stream of images of the terrible chair, the wires and the snaky needles that were to run through his body and tear it to death. The judge's question fell upon him just as he felt the needles, and breathless, he wanted to cry for help.

But why should they ask such a thing? Was there any hope in what he might give for a reason? Could anything he might say keep back the fiery wrath that was sizzling before him, that was about to envelope him? He was very confused, yet he felt a ray of hope pierce the frightful gathering darkness. Of course he knew a good reason why such a sentence should not be passed. His whole being knew it. The divine nature in him, knew a thousand reasons.

The thing to do was to express that reason, and the time was short. He felt then just as he had felt in a dream once, when a little fellow. Some dreadful thing had been after him. He had made an attempt to run, but his feet had been unable to go. The perspiration came to his forehead. He looked at the dignified face of the judge, and his look was one of passionate appeal.

One mental state superseded another. The judge's face faded out of his vision. He was awakened from

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a bad dream. He was a little boy, sick and afraid. He had cried bitterly. Something dreadful had happened. He had done some great, some terrible wrong and cried for his mother's forgiveness. The warm mother-cheeks against his forehead—the mother-arms tight about him—he was safe—nothing could harm him.

There was the judge wanting a reason! Why does he wait! It will be too late!

"Mother is innocent," he cried, and the words choked him. He realized he had made a mistake. He had said the wrong thing. He had been unable to run and the monster was upon him to devour him. "Oh God. Can't I run? Can't I speak? Can nothing be done?"

Sentence was passed upon him. Reason or no reason! It was a mere formality, you foolish boy!

The words, "sentence you to die in the electric chair in the week of February the eighth," fell upon him with fire and teeth. He wanted to shriek, to weep! He was drowning! Hosts of people on the shore! Are they blind! Can't they see? Can't they hear the shrieks?

More formality. "Name?" the horrible sound went on through the corridor of existence.

"Name?"

He talked like a machine. He hardly heard his own name. Then he was taken back to his grave for another little while!

Fred did not come to the festival. He stayed back of Mrs. Valey's candy-store struggling with another of the State's victims. He insisted that it was not all over, that many a man had been convicted, and sentenced and had yet got his liberty. He would go to the Governor! He had already secured the help of a Professor of Law, and both of them would go to the Governor. Before night smothered the formal day

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of doom, she submitted to his influence and seemed to have accepted the hope he offered her. They sat up all night on chairs. What a night!

They had fooled her! So they thought! The story about going to the Governor worked well—it seemed to work well. Matilda ceased wailing and wringing her hands. She did not share her son's views of her innocence. She was as guilty as he was—there was no doubt about that in her mind. With his death, she told herself, must come her death, and Fred thought she was hopeful, because in her eyes a hope-like radiance flickered. She was determined to go. She would write to him, tell him that she was going out of life as he went. She dreamed of the water, the cool waves of the Hudson River, and the rock she had seen near the ugly prison walls. She had gone to visit him when he had been in prison once, and had been ordered out when "time was up." The desire to remain yet awhile near her boy had led her to the river-side and there upon that rock she had sat for almost an hour. It was all clear to her. From that rock she would jump to her death, at the moment of his death, when they led him out.

Her face was relieved of the terror it had had upon it for many months. Both Fred and Anna were sure that she was having faith in their lies, and plotted to keep that faith agoing till the dreadful thing was over. So the days and the weeks went by, and the first few days of February came. Every day Fred reported successful doings, and every day the reports seemed to fan the little flame of hope.

Two nights before the execution was scheduled to take place, she had been left awhile in Jimmie's care. Fred had gone off to the imaginary Governor to bring more hopeful reports. Anna, who had developed frightful headaches, had gone off to see the doctor.

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Minnie was afraid of Matilda, and took care of the candy-store and her baby.

"Come over hear near to me, Jim," said Matilda with morbid quietness, "I must talk to you."

Jim sat down and watched her. Matilda started to talk, but couldn't. Then she began pulling at a string around her neck, and drew out a chamois bag which she tore open, and from which she took out the age-stained bill that it contained and, straightening it out carefully on the table, asked, "Do you want to earn this hundred-dollar bill, Jim?"

Her voice was horrifying, and her tear-stained eyes made Jim look away.

"What do you want?" he asked.

"I wrote a short letter to my boy," she began, sitting up wild-eyed. "If you will get it to him, and bring me an answer in his own hand-writing, you can have it, Jim. But, if you breathe a word of it to Fred or Anna, you don't get a cent."

She sank back on her pillow, and closing her eyes, began feeling about under her till she located an addressed envelope, and handed it to him.

"I can't take it like this," said Jim, standing up, "I must see what's in it first!"

She wrangled with him, he persisted. She screamed and cried and begged.

"I'm not going to get into trouble."

"You won't get into trouble."

"Then why not let me read it first?"

"Do you promise that you won't breathe a word of it to Anna or Fred?"

"I promise."

She consented to his reading her precious letter, and he tore open the envelope and read:

My Dear, Dear Boy:—

Don't be afraid to die. I shall die with

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you. There is nothing in this horrible world worth living for, and I go gladly. Don't be afraid my darling, boy. I am going with you. I shall go the moment you go, and I will be near you. I can't tell you where, if they find out they'll be there. I have a place where they won't find me. I shall be near you, very near you, remember that. I will try to see you too if they only let me. They don't let me move. They watch me just as they watch you. Answer me. Write with your own dear hand. Say you are not afraid because I go with you, and I shall die happy.

God have mercy on us.

Your Mother.

"I can't take that," said Jim throwing the letter down upon the table.

"You must take it," she cried sitting up again. Into her bloodshot eyes came tears from fountains that had gone near dry.

"They'll never take it from me. They won't let me give it to him."

"Use this money. They want money. They'll do anything for money. They're killing my child for money. Tell them I'll kill myself anyway. They don't care about me. Give them half the money, and keep the rest."

"I—" began Jim.

"Look here, Jimmie, my boy, I promise you that I'll kill myself anyway. Look, you'll only be doing me a great last favor. I have dreadful heartaches. I'll die anyway. Do this favor to me, and let me die happy."

Jim struggled desperately, then convinced himself of the logic in her reasoning, and without an excuse, he dressed himself up, and started for the prison, and

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as soon as he was gone Matilda mustered all her waning energy, and dressed hurriedly; but just before she started away, Anna appeared in the doorway.

CHAPTER VII.

It is the destiny of all living things to die. Nature —the universal force gives life, and takes it. Lest there be torture in the first adjustment she with holds consciousness from us, and to lessen the agony of death consciousness is the first thing she takes in the hour of departure—when that may be we never know. The tiger springs upon its prey, and with one blow extinguishes the last flicker of its life. When the wolf and the lynx are struggling, there is no thought of death, and the heat of the struggle takes pain from the inflicted wounds. Even the murderer comes upon his victim unawares, and whichever way he does it, he deals death quickly. There is a balm, a breath of peace that Nature sends with death; and the fore-runner of death turns death to sleep, and makes the biggest man lie down and close his eyes like a child.

Human society alone erects the murderous shambles, dealing for days, and months and years, in the dread of death. Human society alone, drinks the savage joy of torture. We bind the limbs of our victims, and exposing our fangs, laugh in the face of the tortured. Before the eyes, glazing with fear, we build the licking flames that are to consume him. Nature covers the wormy soil with exquisite flowers and leads the imagination that dwells on death into spheres of heavenly color and song. Human society tears off Nature's touches of beauty, and rips open the bosom of the earth, grabs the victim of its blood lust by the neck, and shoves the living, terror-infested head into

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the ghastly hole that he may see, and dread the end to be inflicted upon him.

A thousand times during each day of night, with his hands clasped in agony, Carl came before the doorway of life to plead for the secession of the ravages of fear, for the solace of resignation, for the peace of unconsciousness.

Always the dread of that cruel little instrument, that pernicious machine of destruction, that brainless, heartless force, that monster of civilization! Night and black night-like day, endlessly, his terror stricken imagination brought before him the chair, the straps, the billion needles, the wires, the guards, the soulless witnesses, and the iron executioner, in whirling performances. Now they take him out! The terrible moment has come! They strap him tight, the wretched guards! "Dig your nails into them," says a little voice, but his arms are devoid of strength—they cannot move. The murderous witnesses, who wish to see a man killed, sit with a lying excuse on their lips. "Why are they here? What right have they to witness and gloat over my death? Oh God, those needles! Will they prick and tear and burn, forever? A moment, and it will all be over! Only a moment!"

He feels the cold iron of his bunk. The moment has *not yet come* and there are yet a thousand moments, a million moments before that one moment will come, and end it all. Then the needles will tear, and the doctors will break open the skull, and in the name of science they shall study the brain as if it were a bug or a beetle. "Oh, they are breaking it open now. My God, nowhere to run? Can't I smash the damned head against the wall? Yes, I will. They won't hold their party of my killing. Let them lick my blood then, if they must have it. It will tear them as they tear me.

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"They've dressed me up already, damn their rotten hearts! This black suit!" He involuntarily sent his hand down to feel the cut in the trowser leg. "It is cut so they can put the burning thing to my legs. It will burn the leg, and the hair will smell. There it comes. I can't run! They grab me! They walk me out! They hold my arms, and the iron hand burns my arms! Where are they taking me to? They are going to kill me! A moment and it will all be over! But where will I be? What will happen to me? Will it be dark? Will I suffer? Oh God, the needles. They strap the legs so I can't run when the needles come and tear through me. They will put the things against my neck, right under my head! Oh, God, what did I live for? Why was I ever born?

"My life has been worthless! I have awakened morning after morning sour and unhappy, longing for that which never came, burning with want, hoping for better than that which I had, and never getting anything. It has always gone worse! Worse all the time! Why should I be afraid to die?"

He pressed his eyes tight against his arm, his warm arm that was so soon to be dead, cold meat. His night sky became studded with stars. Into his ears came the sounds of the music he loved to hear, the music he had discovered. The cello solo, the flute player, and the golden afternoons, the evenings in Porto Rico, the washerwoman singing at the top of her voice, sensations like sunlight, and moonlight, like the moonlight over the valley and hills, like the moonlight touching Pura's auburn hair, sensations, sweet, and warm came along like a lazy summer stream, and he stretched out his arms till they reached the dark wall, plunged head first into the ripples, and floated away.

A sound in the corridor dried up the stream, and threw him with a head-splitting crash upon its slimy

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bed of rock. Another victim saw the straps and the needles before his sickened imagination, and in the hopelessness of his doom, cried out into the blackest night, the man-made night, cried out with all the sorrow, and the terror of his race in the shriek he uttered. It was a hopeless shriek, and bore no demands. Carl had heard that often enough before, and it was soon lost in his world like a wandering star shattered in the universe.

The music and the moonlight came back, and he floated again on the stream. Oh the flute, and the heavenly sounds! He dug his eyes deeper into the still warm arm, and hot tears poured over it. Little Minnie! Dear little girl, Minnie! The plaid dress! He saw clearly the red and white stripes and colors. They were on the sofa in back of Mrs. Valey's candy-store. Her soft hair! Her dear, warm body! The hands soon to be turned into meat, had clung about her! Poor Alice too! "Oh life, for this much I am thankful! That beautiful girl, that dear, kind girl with the roses! She didn't move away from me! The man wanted to sit down between us! She moved over quickly to me! She wasn't afraid of me!"

A guard at the bars whispered something, and something white fluttered in. It dizzied him! He sat up! "Can it be? What can it be? Fool! There is no hope!" A nausea gripped his stomach! He controlled himself and looked about anxiously. The white thing was actually there! There was hope! He jumped down from his bunk. He picked it up. It was a note, a letter. He went to the bars, and in the weak light he read. "What the devil is this?" He read it several times, but could not make out a word. He read it again. It was from his mother. What hope had she for him? He read once more, and understood.

Again the guard was at the bars. The fortunate

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guard that did not have to dread the chair. "Hey Bill, answer that, hurry up!"

"Answer that! How can I write?"

Again the shadow was at the bars. The blackness and the walls spoke! "Answer, damn it, if y'r goin' to."

He grabbed the note again. There was a space for writing on it.

"What in the hell do you expect me to write with?"

The shadow returned. "Shut up, you fool! Want to get me into trouble?"

"I'm in trouble," he wanted to say, but couldn't.

Something fell to the stone floor. He dropped on hands and feet to search for it but was seized by an impulse to stretch out and let go of everything. He collected himself. Something stood over him and drove him. Sweeping the narrow floor with his hands he came upon a tiny bit of pencil, grabbed it and sat up on his bunk, exhausted, dazed by all that activity. A sound in the corridor brought him to his senses. There was something to be done at once. With his hands he located the letter, sighed as he began to read it by the dim light, saw a blank space on the paper and began to write.

"I'm sorry," he started, but couldn't go further. The guard was before him.

He felt as he had felt standing before the judge. He was still before the judge. The judge wanted to know why—. He tried to tear open his eyes so he could see. He knew he had to act quickly. He tore off the two words he had written and threw them out through the bars, then fell back upon his bunk again. He was on his face. He grabbed his left shoulder with his right arm and his right shoulder with his left arm and he embraced the images of those whose memory was now all life had for him, sinking down

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and down as he embraced them. A dark object floated on the leaden atmosphere. It came from a great distance. It was a small speck and grew larger. Now it came fast! It came straight at his head! He wanted to get out of the way, but couldn't move! It was the chair! It dashed against his skull. He was killed! He was lost!

His earthly moments were going fast, and yet there were still so many of them. He jumped to his feet. Perhaps he could escape! He gazed about the cell! There was no opening. He grabbed the bars of the door and tried to shake them! They were immovable. He was dizzy! He was terrified and shrieked a horrible shriek of despair.

There was a great white field. A gray, white field. It was the ocean! Over its smooth, motionless surface another dark figure was coming from the distance! It was a speck! It grew larger but he was not afraid of it. He welcomed it instinctively. It was a veiled figure in black. It was his mother. She was coming. She was running. He sank to his knees on the floor and stretched his arms up to the bars.

He had found the way of forgetfullness by dwelling upon his beloved images. Over and over again, he saw little Minnie and embraced her. Time after time, for minutes that were hours and days, he lived in the arms of Alice. He bathed in the moonlight made rich by Pura's face and hair. He smelled the odorous roses and prayed to the sweet-faced girl who wasn't afraid of him, who had moved towards him in the whirling subway. It was the program of the way of forgetfulness! When the sensations that lit up his soul went out, he went to his iron bars, and saw the gray field again, the ocean and the dark-veiled figure always coming to him, always running; and he always embraced her and drank peace.

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"Oh, mother! Your arms! I am not afraid to die!"

CHAPTER VIII.

Mrs. Valey's candy-store! The blind is pulled over the long window and faint reddish light creeps in through streak-like spaces between blind and window frame. It is the last evening. Shadowy forms with pale agonized faces pace the floor, like souls lost in abysmal darkness, ghosts, driven from life, outcasts from the heaven of peace!

Anna wrings her hands! Before her eyes, on the screen of her throbbing imagination, play many pictures. She had come home from the shop. She had played with baby Carl while Matilda had made coffee for her. She had gone to drink her coffee and baby Carl had watched her. She had started back to the shop and baby Carl had run after her to the door, had grabbed her sleeve and had cried till his pale little face grew red. "Play with baby, auntie, play with baby!" Anna throws her head upon her arms and sobs, and sobs! She can hear the little voice!

Minnie is pale as death! She sits in a corner and trembles. She glances now and then at the old sofa and sees his youthful face laughing to her. She hears his jokes, and feels the press of his arms and his hands. Jim, poor Jim, is conscious-stricken and afraid! He excuses his last act of benevolence to Matilda as best he can, and lets his memory, too, gather the fallen leaves of a dead summer. He regrets certain little tricks he played. He is sorry for a fight he had with him once. He has locked up his store and sits with his head bent forward.

Fred's face is livid and he shoots furtive glances at the throbbing dying figure, withered and broken, the

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mother of the *Sacrifice*. She sits on the old sofa. Her face is hidden in her hands. Occasionally she disturbs the ghosts by a sudden shriek of agony, then she falls back and sobs convulsively.

On a chair near the table sits Professor Guano. His white hair is unusually white. His lovely face is frozen lifelessly. The sunken eyes are half closed.

Suddenly Matilda tears her hand from Fred's strong grasp, and sits up.

"Anna, I told you I want my hat and coat," she cries. "If you don't let me go out, I'll kill myself before your eyes. I'll tear my hair, I'll pull my eyes out right before you! Let me go!"

She is given her hat and coat and Fred and Jim go out with her. She leads them about. They let her have her way. They come upon the triangular-shaped space. In the night lights that part of the city is bleak. She turns from the school building where she used to leave her baby and go to the shop, and turns to the gloomy orphanage. Again her tears flow like rain. She is again shaken with convulsive sobbing, then flees from there.

She wipes her eyes and gathers strength. She leads them to the crowded streets and complains of a violent headache.

"Can't you get something for me, Fred?" she begs, whimpering like a child. "If you don't get something for me, it'll drive me crazy."

Fred goes into a drug-store to get the relieving drug and is detained longer than he expected to be. Finally getting it, he hurries out and then sees neither Matilda nor Jimmie. He rushes around like a mad man and returns to that drug-store a thousand times.

It is two o'clock past midnight. Despairing of finding her, he hurries back to the candy-store in the hope that he will find them there. Anna is sobbing and

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wringing her hands, for dawn is approaching. The professor is pacing the floor and Minnie is crying in a corner.

No one knows anything about either Jim or Matilda and they forget weeping and begin to plan going out in search of them; but Fred, exhausted, tells them that searching is futile—he has been searching for hours.

They decide to wait yet one hour and then to summon the aid of the police.

It is three o'clock. Fred has dressed up and is ready to go out. Suddenly the cow bell rings, and Jim reappears alone, exhausted, his eyes staring wildly, and out of breath.

They gather about him and question him. He claims that she tore away from him and ran so swiftly and turned so many corners, that he lost sight of her.

Fred goes out to get the help of the police authorities, but their help is of no avail.

CHAPTER IX.

A thousand terror-infested nights and endless moments of agony to each. A curse extending throughout eternity! He is offered the Book and the Cross, but it is too late, he shoves them away in terror. The decaying brain is afire and the consuming flames light up the crumbling corridors of the memory. He hears clearly, "It's never done me no good an' it's always helping you out."

He is already bathed for the last time, and yet the dreadful hours drag and there are yet years of agony. He is alone in his cell and in terror of the door, and crouches into a corner of the clothesless bed, hugging the body that is his and that is against his will to be destroyed.

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The good chaplains offer sympathy, but he cries for help! What avail their sympathy? Can the Bible stay the hand of the rat-like guards that are to crawl in and carry him out to be murdered? His unmitigated earthly struggle had left little time for speculating on the hereafter. He is concerned about the needles and the chair.

The dreadful hours, black and deaf, still drag. There is no end to them. Suddenly he hears some one aproaching. He hears the horrible turning of the key. A young man, a living being, a thing with senses like himself, enters, and terror tears at his flesh. It is the moment, he thinks! It has come upon him unaware! He has no chance to fight back! He gasps! He tries to plead for mercy, for another moment of life! The instinct to live is goading him and he must fight!

The visitor is a young doctor. He has been sent by the good State to inject into his blood a fluid that will help the electrons tear and kill the living tissues,—sent by the State, society, the population, every one, you and me. The doctor takes hold of the arm. It is his arm, but the doctor is stronger. He shoves back the sleeve. He squeezes the feeling skin, and jabs his needle into it. It is one needle. It is the first needle! He pulls his arms away. He wishes to pounce upon the doctor and tear him with his teeth, he wants to shriek, but he hates the doctor and does not allow himself to show his weakness. He rushes back to his corner when the doctor disappears and wishes to tear his hair, for he is a living man in his grave, and living men in graves have been known to tear their hair.

The hour and the moment come at last! Preparations are being made! He is aware of something going on! His manhood rises in him. He will resist unto death! But when the hard-faced, hard-hearted, ugly guards come he follows quietly. One guard is at each

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side! He must tear his hands from their claw-like grasp and run! The blood in his veins tells him he must!

Oh, God! The room and the chair! Run! Oh, where to?

There are pale-faced witnesses! All brave men! Brave enough to see a man killed without a wince!

He is near the chair! He is near it! The chair! How can he escape? A guard with a wad of chewing tobacco bulging out his cheek, with chew-tobacco juice on his mustache and running down the unshaved chin, lifts his knee, trips him, and throws him into the chair. They strap him, so he cannot run! He will not endure it! He will resist! He must resist! He is drowning! Hordes of his kind are on the shore! If he can only regain his voice and scream for help, they will help him! But they, those he vaguely sees, are there to see him killed and the bleat of no lamb has ever saved its life!

But he must find his voice! Some one in all the mass of men safe on the shore will throw him a rope! He finds his voice! He shrieks, the walls shriek! His shriek is choked! The needles at last! The kind needles rip and tear like wild furies!

The thing is done! Thus man proclaims his strength! Praise God and *Man!* It has been said He alone gives life, but He can't keep to himself the right to take it!

* * * * * * * *

The dreadful dawn is soon to come over the black tree masses and the black walls and the iron gate, the blackest thing of all. There in that little window in the wall where the faint light burns into flesh and into the night, is her child about to be led out to the shambles! The desire to cry, to weep and to wail is choked by the fear of detection.

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The Hudson, too, is choked! The winter night has congealed the surface and the great blood struggles below. There are openings though, and even a withered, eaten body can break through ice.

Oh, baby face, my whole life's hope, they will butcher you as they butcher lambs! Oh, iron-hearted men, where's my mother right? I bore him. I suffered all the agonies of motherhood!

The cold bites like the current in the chair!

Her baby grows old! He is sitting at the table. Anna is there! George is there! She hears again the last baby laugh! It turns into a shriek as a spark blown up by the wind turns into wild consuming flames! From all the walls comes a cry of horror and from the Palisades wails back the echo.

He is sitting at the table! He is telling of his incarceration in the dungean! He shrieks to show how they all shrieked! She goes mad, she shrieks, too, along with that uncanny lamentation which fills the lonely winter night! And with her shriek, the flickering candle light dies out. The black shadowy form falls in a heap on the lonely, cold rock.

Oh, the end of some of us!

CHAPTER X.

The sickly light flickered in old Mrs. Valey's candy-store, and the ugly yellow picture on the wall reflected it. How long it can take for dawn to come and to go. How strong the human mind is that it may endure some things!

After dawn came, Society licked its chops! The newspapers smeared red their pages with the sanguinary details of the State murder!

They wept over the two dead forms! They waited

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for no ceremonies. What ceremonies had been imperative, the great State had performed. The horrible mutilations were unseeable! They called upon the good mother earth to swallow them and then tried to forget!

Professor Guano started for his farm and promised Fred to think over the idea of selling it and of buying a smaller one in the Catskills. Jim Daniels and his wife made preparations to buy another candy-store and to move away from the accursed place where old Lady Valey had breathed her last alone.

Anna was dumb! Another fever had come upon her and again Fred took her to the Catskills. On the farm they found the old lady very gray and rheumatic, but lovelier even than she had been. Poor Will. Every muscle was gnarled like the roots of an old tree. He had climbed to the crest of the mountain road, and had already begun the descent. The light of the other sky made his weather-beaten face as lovely as goodness itself.

They said very little! They did everything that can be done to rest the weary and to allay the pain of their wounds.

The days went by, short and sad and gray. Again the snow began falling and fell till the woods were packed and the blue mountains turned white. It was warm without. The whirl was light and fell lazily. Fred put on his warm clothes and stole out. He hurried at first, for he wanted no one to see him. Will had gone off for a load of wood and had refused to allow him to help. His dear old mother was busy baking something she hoped would please them. He wore a pair of his brother's felt boots and his warm feet sank into the soft snow and gave him pleasure. He came to the old red bridge. The red paint was still visible here and there through the snow. He made his

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way down to the snow-covered rock which had never for a moment left his memory. He stood there holding on to the trunk of a young tree that shot obliquely from the incline. The trees were bare and blue and white. The crags were all covered soft. He saw through the flutter the dim outline of the Catskill ridge and in every dent and curve he read some paragraph of the narrative of his youth.

The whirl grew heavier and more confused. He became cold and started up. The whirl grew still more heavy and still more confusing. The blue gray masses of woodland blended with the heavier whirl and he stood on the bridge end and gazed into chaotic atmosphere. "Souls lost in the mystery of life," he murmured, and smiled. Never had he been more certain of his way.

Suddenly he perceived in the snowblown distance before him a dark figure. Some one was coming.

"Where in the world are you going to?"

"Oh, I just went out for a little walk," said Anna; "have you any objections?"

"No, Anna, I have not. I'm glad you came. Isn't this lovely?"

Anna sighed. "I could walk on like this for a week."

"Do you want to go a bit further? Let's go to the woods. You needn't fear. I know my way well. I haven't forgotten a thing. It's as if I had never left this place."

They walked close against each other for a long while. They walked off the road and into the roadless woods. Still the snow fell and still the warm air was one great whirl. Anna became tired and they began plowing their way back to the road again.

"I love this better than I do the summer."

"I love the summer, too."

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"Yes, so do I. Wait till Spring comes out here."

"I'm afraid I'll see little of Spring out here."

"Why not?"

"I don't know. What will Denelli do without me?"

"There are only too many to take your place at Denelli's."

"I've got to work somewhere. It might as well be with Denelli."

"Work with me."

"*I* work with you?"

"Why not?"

"You want something more beautiful than this shop wreck, to work with you, Fred."

"I know of no one more beautiful!"

"Don't laugh at a poor old maid like me. It's a sin."

"Laugh? I sometimes think I've done my life's laughing."

"So do I."

"That's why, Anna, I want to be your comrade."

"An ugly old thing like me?"

"You are talking of clothes, Anna. I can go into town to-morrow and buy you a glittering dress, some powder and paint and perfume, and make you look like a queen; but you might look ugly to me then."

They came upon the road and heard sleigh-bells. Some one was coming from behind them. They waited. It was William bringing home his load of wood.

The puffing horses stopped. William was glad to see them and, with his horse-blanket fixed a seat for Anna beside him. Fred sat on the other side of her. The horses started again and the sleigh-bell sounds fluttered in the air like golden flakes among the white ones.

END.

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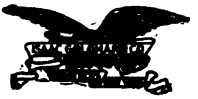

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